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## Jehovah-Shammah

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## ARTICLE THIRTY-SIX: SHAMMAH, THE EIGHTH COMPOUND NAME OF JEHOVAH

There are some fourteen names and titles for the city of Jerusalem as recorded in the scriptures. These would include:

The City of David (2 Sam. 6:12)

The City of God (Psa. 46:4)

The City of Truth (Zech. 8:3)

The Perfection of Beauty (Lam. 2:15)

The Holy City (Mt. 4:5)

The City of the Great King (Mt. 5:35)

But during Earth's Golden Age (the Millennium) it will receive its final name, as predicted by Ezekiel:

*"All the way around shall be eighteen thousand cubits; and the name of the city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE" (Ezek. 48:35).*

The psalmist and Zechariah join in with Ezekiel in rejoicing over this fact:

*"For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: 'This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it'" (Psa. 132:13, 14).*

*"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says the LORD. 'I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, the Mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain.' Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with his staff in his hand because of great age. The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets'" (Zech. 2:10; 8:3-5).*

This wonderful truth of God's abiding presence is also the focal point as one considers two O. T. sacred structures.

By far, the most important, indeed, most precious fact about the tabernacle of Moses and the temple of Solomon was God's glorious promise in regard to those worship centers:

*"There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel" (Exod. 25:22).*

*"There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory... I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God" (Exod. 29:43, 45).*

Did indeed Jehovah Shammah keep His promise? Consider:

- In regard to the tabernacle of Moses:

*"Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exod. 40:34).*

- In regard to the temple of Solomon:

*“And it was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the Lord, For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever, the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God” (2 Chron. 5:13, 14).*

I well remember conducting one of my very first funerals as a young, immature pastor. A 22-year-old airman had been (the parents were told) accidentally shot to death and the government would be shipping his body back to the little town where my church was located. Upon reading this, I contacted the parents, offering them my services. In essence (at first) they said, thanks but no thanks, for neither attended church anywhere. The next day, however, the father called and wanted to know if our sanctuary might be available for the funeral. I answered, “by all means!” Well, three days later the boy’s mother asked if I would preach the funeral. Without giving it much thought, I agreed. It was the custom in our little town to conduct a funeral service in three separate stages:

- First, holding a brief service in the funeral parlor
- Second, the official funeral in a church
- Third, the closing service at the gravesite

Finally, a full week after the initial death announcement, the body arrived and the parents, a few friends, and myself met in the funeral parlor. The boy’s coffin was sealed, and there it sat, covered by an American flag, and surrounded by a special honor guard. Suddenly, the grieving mother, who had been quietly sitting nearby the coffin, jumped to her feet, and fully realizing that not only was her son dead, but she would not even be able to see his body, literally fell apart! Sobbing hysterically, she threw herself across the coffin and began wailing, “My boy, my boy, my baby boy,” refusing all gentle attempts to remove her. It was, to say the least, a terrible scene indeed! But things would go from bad to worse, for at that moment the funeral director approached me and whispered in my ear:

“Reverend, it is the duty of the officiating clergyman to console the bereaved. May I strongly suggest this be done – now!” Sure, right.

But what to do? Pray for the rapture? Run? I remember silently crying to God, “Please, oh, please, help me! I don’t know what to do. I don’t know what to say.” Even though this transpired over a half century ago, I’ll never forget that still, small voice which seemed to say, “Don’t you know? There’s nothing *you* can do or say. I’ve already written the only words which can possibly comfort her.”

It was then I realized just where these words could be found. So, with some fear, but a newly found confidence, I approached the mother, still prostrated across the coffin, gently placing my hand on her shoulder and began reading the following:

*“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (John 14:1-3).*

As I continued reading (eventually the entire chapter) an incredible transformation took place in that little parlor. The mother went from wailing, to sobbing, to whimpering, to that of subdued silence. She then removed herself from the coffin, sat down in a chair and whispered, “it will be okay!”

Her composure remained the same through the funeral and gravesite service. To say the least, I learned a lesson that day which has stuck with me over these past five decades, and that our feeble attempts to comfort are both powerless and indeed pitiful, but His can and will heal the hurting and heartbroken!

One final thought in regard to Jehovah Shammah: It concerns the two most well-known sisters in the Bible—Mary and Martha. They are most remembered by the events as recorded in Luke 10 and John 11.

- The Luke 10 passage:

*“Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, ‘Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.’ But the Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her’” (Luke 10:38-42).*

Here of course the spiritual “star” is Mary.

- The John 11 passage:

In this case it is Martha who shines like a beacon of light in the hour of darkness! It began with the death of Lazarus, beloved brother of these two sisters. However, to their great surprise and sorrow, Jesus, dear friend of all three, was not there when he died; indeed, did not finally arrive until four days later! He had explained the reason for His absence to the disciples (John 11:15) but the grieving sisters were unaware of all this. Here are the events which then transpired:

*“So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ Martha said to him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.’ Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’ She said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.’ When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private,*

*'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.'* And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him" (John 11:20-29).

Martha's nine little words spoken to her sorrowing sister would make all the difference, turning the darkness of despair to the light of hope: *"The Teacher is here and is calling for you."*

The psalmist had this idea when he wrote: *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea"* (Psa. 46:1, 2).

He is a very present help in time of trouble. He is an ever-present help in time of need. He is Jehovah-Shammah at weddings. He is an ever-present strength in times of sorrow. He is our joy in times of rejoicing. Jehovah-Shammah—THE LORD WHO IS PRESENT.

The greatest thing about heaven is probably connected to the worst thing about hell. The worst thing about hell is not the terrible pain and the eternity, but rather that hell will be a place where Jesus Christ will be conspicuously absent throughout all eternity. On the other hand, the greatest thing about heaven is not the pearly gates, the ivory palaces, the jasper walls, or the streets of gold, but rather, heaven will be a place where Jesus Christ will be conspicuously present throughout all eternity. Jehovah-Shammah—THE LORD WHO IS PRESENT.