

## THE SHEKINAH GLORY

The Shekinah glory was visible in the Old Testament in the forms of light, fire, and cloud, or in a combination of all three. **It is the manifestation of the presence of God.** In the Garden, Adam and Eve experienced the Shekinah Glory at the time they heard God's voice, as He walked in the cool of the day (Gen. 3:8a). The Shekinah Glory was visible to Moses in a flame of fire while he was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law. (Exodus 3:1-5). In his journey through the desert to the Promised Land, Moses spent eighty days and nights in the presence of God. The Shekinah Glory led Israel through the desert to the Promised Land by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21-22).

The greatest manifestation of the Shekinah Glory was visible in Mount Sinai, when the Lord came down upon it on the third day: The third morning there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. When Moses brought the people from the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain, Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, for the Lord descended upon it in fire; its smoke ascended like that of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. As the trumpet blast grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with a voice. The Lord came down upon Mount Sinai to the top of the mountain, and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain and Moses went up (Exodus 19: 16-20). That was the time of the giving of the Ten Commandments.

The priests and the seventy elders of Israel also experienced the manifestation of the Shekinah Glory when they went up [the mountain side] as God had commanded them to do. "And they saw the God of Israel and under His feet it was like pavement of bright sapphire stone, like the very heavens in clearness. And the Lord said to Moses, Come up to Me into the mountain and be there, and I will give you tables of stone, with the law and the commandments which I have written that you may teach them. Then Moses went up into the mountain and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day God called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the glory of the Lord appeared to the Israelites like devouring fire on the top of the mountain. Moses entered into the midst of the cloud and went up the mountain, and Moses was on the mountain forty days and nights" (Exodus 24: 10, 12, 15-18). While Moses was on the mountain with God receiving instructions from Him, Israel was committing the sin of idolatry when they saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain. [They] gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, Up, make us gods to go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him (Exodus 32: 1). The Shekinah Glory departed for a while as a result, but after Moses interceded for the people, it returned. Moses said to the Lord, *If Your Presence does not go with me, do not carry us up from here!*

*The Lord said to Moses, I will do this thing also that you have asked, for you have found favor, loving-kindness, and mercy in My sight and I know you personally and by name. And Moses said,*

*I beseech You, show me Your glory. . . and the Lord said, Behold, there is a place beside Me, and you shall stand upon the rock. And while My glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take away My hand and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen (Exodus 33:15,17-18,22-23).* Moses went to meet with the Lord a second time for another forty days and forty nights to receive the tables of the covenant, the Ten Commandments. When he came down from Mount Sinai his face shone and sent forth beams by reason of his speaking with the Lord (Exodus 34:28-35). His face radiated the Shekinah Glory never before seen.

After King Solomon built the temple the Shekinah Glory was transferred from the Tabernacle to the temple. The Israelites experienced its manifestation in the completeness of the temple. *It came to pass when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of God, so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud (I Kings 8:1-13).* But in the book of Ezekiel we read of its departure from the temple. (Ezekiel 9:3a, 10:4, 11:22-23). It will not return until Messiah comes. Haggai 2:9 says, The glory of this house (millennium temple) shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, says the Lord.

#### **The Shekinah Glory in the New Testament (Luke 2:8-9)**

*And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them; and they were sore afraid.* This was clearly the Shekinah Glory announcing the birth of the Messiah, the Son of God to the Jewish shepherds in a choir of angels. The world was unaware of this beautiful scene because it was sleeping. Only this humble class of people was awake to receive the angels' message of salvation and experience the Shekinah Glory. "Emmanuel, God with us".

The Shekinah Glory (Star of Bethlehem) was of great significance to an important group of people: the three wise men. They lived where is today's Iran. According to history they were hereditary priests, astronomers, who watched the star for signs; they were invested with political power. Over time their ancestors had contact with the Jews in captivity and learned about the Jewish worship and prophecy. In the close of the Babylonian exile, the prophet Daniel lived among them.

It is important to say here that the Wise men did not go to the stable, but to a house in Bethlehem when YAHSHUA was two years old. We read in Matthew 2: 10-11 the following: When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And on going into the house, they saw the Child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then opening their treasure bags, they presented to Him gifts- gold and frankincense and myrrh.

When the Shekinah Glory took the form of a man to dwell among men, His glory was seen by all who dwelt in darkness according to prophecy in Isaiah 9:2: *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelled in the land of the shadow of death, upon them has*

*the light shined.* The Shekinah Glory shined through His life and words. He was the light of the world. Peter, James and John had the privilege to see Him transfigured in His Shekinah glory. Matthew's passage says that *His face shined as the sun and His garments became white as the light.* The voice of God they heard coming out of the cloud was the same voice Israelites had heard in Mount Sinai. Mark passage tells us that *His garments became glistening, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them, and a cloud overshadowed Him.* In Luke we read that *the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment became white and dazzling. They saw His glory while the cloud overshadowed Him.*

Believers can reflect the Shekinah Glory of the Messiah, just as Moses reflected the brilliance of the presence of the Lord when he came down the mountain. Paul says in the second letter to Corinthians 3:11-18: *For if that which was put passing and fading away came with splendor, how much more must that which remains and is permanent abide in glory and splendor! Since we have such hope, we speak very freely and openly and fearlessly. Nor like Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze upon the finish of the vanishing [splendor which had been upon it]. In fact, their minds were grown hard and calloused; for until this present day, when the Old Testament is being read, that same veil still lies [on their hearts] not being lifted that in Christ it is made void and done away. Yes, down to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies upon their minds and hearts. But whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is stripped off and taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. And all of us, as with unveiled face continued to behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; from the Lord who is the Spirit.* In the completion of our redemption we will be dressed in radiance reflecting the glory of the Lord, as we are presented to Him, as His bride! The believer in his spiritual transformation reflects the glory of the Lord. Our Savior lives in unapproachable light; we are the reflection, of His glory.