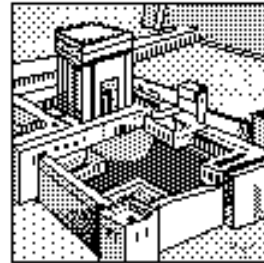


הַמְחֲזִיר שְׁכִינָתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן

Who Returns His Divine Presence to Zion

The Seventeenth Benediction of the Shemonei Esrei (Eighteen Benedictions) praises G-d for the return of His presence, the *Shekinah*, to Zion. This is based upon the texts of the Torah in which the *Shekinah* or the visible glory of G-d first comes upon the sanctified *Mishcan* (Tabernacle) and then fills the *Heichal* (Temple) that Solomon built.



In the moving prayer of Solomon as he was dedicating the newly built Temple, we read in 1 Kings 9:3

And Adonai said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your supplication, which you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built by putting My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.

So the presence of Adonai filled the *Heichal* Solomon had built and that the glory of G-d filled the space.

In like manner, the Seventeenth Benediction blesses Adonai for His promise to fill the rebuilt Temple with His glory, and to restore the service of the priests and our worship there. We can read about this in the prophet Ezekiel:

Ezek. 43:4 And the glory of Adonai came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east. 5 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of Adonai filled the house.

Ezek. 44:4 Then He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the house; and I looked, and behold, the glory of Adonai filled the house of Adonai, and I fell on my face.

We therefore await the time when the Temple will be rebuilt, the service in the Temple will be restored, and the worship of Adonai will once again have a worldwide dimension with the Temple as the single representation of that worship.

Be pleased, Adonai, our G-d
with Your people Israel and their prayer
and restore the service to the Holy of Holies in Your abode,
and the fire-offerings of Israel;
and accept their prayer, lovingly and willingly.
And may You always find pleasure
with the service of Your people, Israel.
And may our eyes behold
Your merciful return to Zion
Blessed are You, Adonai,
Who returns His Divine Presence to Zion.

and I looked,
and behold, the
glory of Adonai
filled the house
of Adonai, and I
fell on my face.

Ezekiel 44:4