

ing, "Let the Lord be magnified." Unlike the Jews at the mean appearance of their temple, we have no cause to bewail the contrast, for the magnificence of this house far outstrips the first. But then, as the glory of a Church consists not in its external splendor, but in its inward adornings—in the order, holiness, and fellowship of its worshippers, and, above all, in the presence and favor of its Divine Head, so let our striving be, that, having won to this enlargement, we become a temple in our hearts to praise God, and enjoy the presence and blessing of the Lord of the temple in our midst, and our prayer therefore be, "Lord, fill this house with thy presence, and these hearts with thy praise." It was the presence of the Lord God from between the Cherubim that made Solomon's temple so honored; it was the promised arrival of the Lord of the temple into His house that made the second temple more glorious than the first; and it is His presence and blessing manifested in His ordinances that will put a glory and honor, far above any outward adorning, upon our Church. Wherefore, let us continue to solicit the favor of His presence and of His indwelling—that He would make His abode with us; then will ordinances be delightful, and sacraments be effectual unto salvation; then will it be good for us to be here.

But now for the spiritual temple that Messiah is to erect. It is a temple of souls, a sanctuary of living stones, to serve God. Observe this Church. It has been set apart for Divine worship, and is to be employed in Jesus' service. Not that we say anything holy exists in such dedication, or that any virtue attaches to stone and lime. There is not in these walls any sacredness, nor virtue in that roof, however artistic; nevertheless, the building has been dedicated to God's service, and is to be treated as sacred. So, the spiritual house is set apart for God: the believer surrenders himself; his body is the court, and his soul the sanctuary. You are aware that the temple of Solomon was divided into two parts—the holy place, and the holiest of all, a veil separating. Within the precincts nothing profane was suffered to enter, no vestige of idolatry ever seen. So is the believer holy—his body the temple of the Holy One, and his soul the most holy place, in which no idol is suffered to reign. But the holiness of the man is better than that of the building, for the latter is but external and ceremonial, whereas the former is in spirit and in truth. The believer loves the Lord and hates every false way. His holiness is real, vital, and practical, and therefore is he superior as a temple to the material structure. Moreover, he engages in the divine service with delight. The temple at Jerusalem was constantly employed; the altar smoke^d, and incense ascended, morning and evening;—but the believer officiates morning and evening in his household, and devotes his life to God's service,—not by a few solitary acts, and not on prescribed occasions only, but his heart burns with affection; and his life is a sacrifice to God. Observe him on Sabbath or week-days. His worship sanctifies his work, and his work becomes enhanced in value. While not slothful in business, he is fervent in spirit, serving God. And so, superior is the living temple to the dead house.

Once more: The Temple at Jerusalem was the residence of Jehovah. The Shechinah, or cloud of His presence, dwelt there, and from between the Cherubims did HE shine. But now He dwells in the hearts of His children; the light in their understanding He kindles, and love in their hearts He inflames; the altar of their affections He occupies, and there burns the sacred fire of love to God and charity to men: His Holy Spirit, as a living, sanctifying agent, takes up His abode in them,—and thus more highly privileged than any temple at Jerusalem are these living temples of God. They form the altar in which He who is a spirit dwells; on the hearth of their affection His love glows, and constantly and with delight are they occupied in His service. Thus superior are they to the dead, unconscious house at Jerusalem.

The spiritual temple is something to be feared as well as prized. There God dwells; and where He resides, there reverence and solemnity are due.