

THE HOUSE OF THE LORD:



A CATHOLIC BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE TEMPLE IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

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THE TEMPLE IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

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THE HOUSE OF THE LORD:

AN INTRODUCTION TO TEMPLE THEOLOGY

“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.*”

I CHRONICLES 5:13–14

“One thing I ask of the Lord, this I seek:
To dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
that I may gaze on the loveliness of the Lord
and contemplate his Temple.”

PSALM 27 :4

I. WHAT IS ‘TEMPLE THEOLOGY’?

1. **DEFINITION:** ‘Temple theology’ may be defined most simply as the study of the Jerusalem Temple—its history and theology, its signs and symbols, its sacrifices and priesthood— as a central shaping influence upon the life of ancient Israel and early Christianity.
 - a. “The Temple theme is perhaps the richest in all of biblical theology, *embracing the mysteries of Christ, Church, and Kingdom; liturgy, sacraments, and priesthood; salvation, sanctification, and divine filiation.*”¹
 - b. The lifeblood of ancient Israel and the early Church is the Scriptures of these respective communities.
 - So, to study ‘Temple theology’ is to investigate the impact and influence of the Jerusalem Temple (and the people, places and things related to it) upon the whole of Sacred Scripture—both Old and New Testament.
 - c. In Sacred Scripture, temple theology pervades the whole of the canon—the Old and New Testaments:
 - “In the Temple we perceive the ‘end,’ the meaning of the salvation history told in the Bible ... We see this “end” in the beginning, on the first pages of Scripture, where *the world’s creation is carefully depicted as the building of a cosmic Temple*, a holy place for God to dwell with his people. In Scripture’s final pages, we witness *a new creation*, described as a city come down from heaven, a city with no temple.”²

¹ S.W. Hahn, “Introduction,” in: *Letter & Spirit: Temple and Contemplation: God’s Presence in the Cosmos, Church, and Human Heart* 4 (2008): 8 (emphasis added).

² S.W. Hahn, “Introduction,” 7–8.

2. THE FOCAL POINT OF ANCIENT JUDAISM.

- a. It is impossible to overstate the importance of the Jerusalem Temple in ancient Judaism (and early Christianity).
 - **N. T. Wright:** “The Temple was the focal point of every aspect of Jewish national life. Local synagogues and schools of Torah in other parts of Palestine, and in the Diaspora, in no way replaced it, but gained their significance from their implicit relation to it. Its importance at every level can hardly be overestimated.”³
 - **G.K. Beale:** “Those who acknowledge the cosmic symbolism of the Temple understand its meaning in a variety of ways.”⁴
- b. *The Dwelling Place of God.* The *Dictionary of New Testament Background* explains why this is so:
 - “Attitudes toward the Temple at Jerusalem varied considerably from time to time and from group to group within Judaism ... the Temple was considered to be the very dwelling place of God, in a way shared by no other place on earth.⁵ Even the prophets who had grave reservations about the cultic practices going on in their own time believed that the Temple was nevertheless God’s dwelling among humankind. Ezekiel, for example, who says that he saw the glory of God depart the Temple because of defiling practices (Ezek. 8–10), also says that God will return to live forever in a new Temple (Ezek. 43:1–12).”⁶
- c. *Six Reasons.* In addition, the *Dictionary of New Testament Background* adds at least six reasons:⁷
 - i. The Jerusalem Temple was “a sign of Israel’s election” from among the peoples of the earth.⁸
 - ii. It stood on a site “chosen by theophany” long before its construction.⁹
 - iii. Zion was “the mountain of God” (Psa. 68:17).¹⁰

³ N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 224. Emphasis added.

⁴ Gregory Beale, “The Final Vision of the Apocalypse and Its Implications for a Biblical Theology of the Temple,” in *Heaven on Earth*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Simon Gathercole (Carlisle [England: Paternoster Press, 2004], 200), 200.

⁵ See for example *Psa.* 27:4 “One thing I ask of the Lord, this I seek: *To dwell in the house of the Lord* all the days of my life, that I may gaze on the loveliness of the Lord and contemplate his Temple. See also: *Exod.* 23:19; *II Sam.* 24:20; *I Ki.* 3:1, 6:1, 37; 7:9, 12, 40; *II Ki.* 25:40; *Zech.* 14:20, 21; *Matt.* 12:4; *Mark* 2:26; *Luke* 6:4; *Heb.* 10:21.

⁶ B. Chilton, P. W. Comfort, and M. O. Wise, “Temple, Jewish,” ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 1171 (emphasis added).

⁷ *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 1171.

⁸ *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 1171.

⁹ *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 1171. *II Chron.* 3:1 “Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.” See also: *II Sam.* 24:16.

¹⁰ *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 1171. *Psa.* 68:17 “The chariots of God are twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands; the Lord is among them; *Sinai is now in the sanctuary.*”

- iv. The Temple was “*even identified with the original location of the garden of Eden.*”¹¹
 - v. “Even the destruction of [the Temple in] 587 B.C. did not disprove Israel’s election; rather, God would return and once more make Jerusalem his choice (*Zech. 1:17*).”¹²
 - vi. All of humanity would one day stream to Jerusalem to worship Israel’s God, and Israel would stand at the head of the nations (See: *Isa. 2:1–4*).¹³
3. **GOD IN THE MIDST OF HIS PEOPLE: ELECTRIFYING HOLINESS.**
- a. As we will discover, there were many different chapters in the “story” of the temple in the Old Testament.
 - b. These various stages of salvation history have one primary feature which unites them: the firm belief that *God dwells in the midst of His people*—in all of His glory. This concept is at the very heart of biblical faith.
 - c. *Electrifying Holiness.* A central concept of our study is this: that the Temple is not just a religious building or a place where one *prays to God*. In biblical faith, the temple, in every stage of its development is the very *dwelling place of God*.
 - d. For this reason, Jewish biblical scholar Jon Levenson is accurate when he states that the Temple is a place of “*electrifying holiness.*”¹⁴
4. **BEYOND BRICK AND MORTAR.** At the outset of our study, we might be tempted to consider the phrases “*Solomon’s Temple*” and “*the dwelling place of God*” as virtual synonyms.
- a. Yet, this would be mistaken, for Solomon’s Temple was but one stage—albeit an immensely important one—in the long history of *God dwelling among His people*.
 - b. Prior to Solomon’s temple was the Tabernacle of the wilderness. After its destruction, there is the so-called Second Temple / Temple of Herod. What’s more, beyond these edifices is a still greater reality, which eclipses the Temple.
 - c. This brings us to a central underpinning of the course: *beyond these man-made structures of Israel is the firm and clear conviction that “the house of God” transcends brick and mortar—and is a living reality.*
 - d. In various New Testament texts, temple can refer not only to the physical dwelling in Jerusalem, but: Jesus, the Church—and even, the heart of the baptized Christian.

¹¹ *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 1171. *Ezek. 28:13–14* “You were *in Eden, the garden of God*; every precious stone was your covering, carnelian, topaz, and jasper, chrysolite, beryl, and onyx, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald; and wrought in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. With an anointed guardian cherub I placed you; *you were on the holy mountain of God*; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.” (See also: *Ezek. 34:1ff*).

¹² *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 1171. *Zech. 1:17* “Cry again, Thus says the LORD of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity, and *the LORD will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.*”

¹³ *Isa. 2:2–3* “It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, *and many peoples shall come, and say: ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.’* For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”

¹⁴ Jon Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 77.

5. **JESUS, THE LIVING TEMPLE.** Above all, it is Jesus who is *the Living Temple*, and whose crucified flesh is for us the “veil of the temple,” torn for our sins:
- **Heb. 10:19-22** “Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way *which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh*, and since we have a great priest over *the house of God*, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”
 - **John 2:19-21** “Jesus answered them, ‘*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*’ The Jews then said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?’ *But he spoke of the temple of his body.*”
6. **THE TEMPLE OF THE CHURCH.**
- a. Moreover, for Saint Paul, not only was it the case that Jesus’ body was the New Temple—but *the Church itself* was the “temple of God:”
- **Eph. 2:19-22** “So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, *built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*”
- b. Hahn explains:
- “In the Church, the promise of the Temple is realized. The Church is the house of prayer for all peoples, the holy mountain in which God is worshipped in Spirit and truth.”¹⁵
7. **THE TEMPLE IN THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER.**
- a. In the above quote from *Ephesians*, Paul is referring to *the Church as a whole*, the entire body of Christ.¹⁶ Yet, elsewhere, he speaks of *individual believers* as the ‘temple of God:’
- **II Cor. 5:1** “For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house *not made with hands*, eternal in the heavens.”¹⁷
- b. Hahn adds:
- “The Temple that we are is to be transfigured in body as well as in soul, that it might become at last a worthy habitation for *the divine fire within.*”¹⁸ “God has purchased this temple-soul by his own blood; it belongs to him alone as his own delightful dwelling. His love for this soul must be inconceivable for he has paid an almost incredible price for it. *It*

¹⁵ S.W. Hahn, “Introduction” in: *Letter & Spirit*, 8.

¹⁶ The same is true in *I Cor.* 3:16, i.e., Paul is referring to the church as a whole, and not merely individuals: “Do you not know that *you are God’s temple* and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?”

¹⁷ See also: *I Cor.* 6:19 “Do you not know that *your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you*, which you have from God?”

¹⁸ Thomas Dubay, “The Indwelling of Divine Love: The Revelation of God’s Abiding Presence in the Human Heart,” in: *Letter & Spirit: Temple and Contemplation*, 187 (emphasis added).

is his. Yet at the same time, and even more inconceivably, He is its possession. God belongs to man."¹⁹

8. **BOTH / AND.** The above Scriptures underscore that temple theology involves a "both / and"—the temple *is* "brick and mortar"—but *not only so*.
 - a. Therefore, in our study, we will deal with both. We will carefully examine the various stages of Israel's tabernacle and temple.
 - b. Yet, we will go beyond those sanctuaries "*made with hands*"²⁰ and concern ourselves with these other manifestations of the temple "*not made with hands.*"

II. TEMPLE THEOLOGY IS BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

1. **BACK TO THE BEGINNING.** As we will soon see, the roots of biblical "temple theology" do not first appear in the story of David, or Solomon's Temple, or even the Tabernacle of the Exodus. The temple first appears in the Creation narratives of the early chapters of *Genesis*—where Adam appears as the high priest of the temple of Eden, and is called to "fill the earth" with God's glorious temple presence.
2. **BEYOND CREATION ...** Temple theology shows up many other places in *Genesis*:
 - the flood narrative;
 - the call of Abraham;
 - Jacob's ladder, to name a few.
3. **THROUGHOUT THE PENTATEUCH ...** It re-occurs throughout the remainder of the Pentateuch:
 - ... in the divine instructions for the Tabernacle in *Exodus*;
 - ... in the entirety of Leviticus, with its many temple sacrifices—especially the Day of Atonement;
 - ... in the "glory cloud" of the wilderness in *Numbers* and in the final words about Moses in *Deuteronomy*;
4. **AND ACROSS THE PAGES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.** Aside from the Pentateuch, temple theology is seen:
 - ... in the successes and failures in the book of *Joshua*, as the Ark of the Covenant preceded the Israelites into battle;
 - ... in David's story—and God's holy covenant with him. The theology of the *Psalms* becomes meaningless apart from the reality of the temple;
 - ... just as it is impossible to read the *Psalms* without it, one cannot read the Wisdom books without encountering temple theology.²¹
 - ... in numerous ways, the message of the "major" biblical prophets is saturated with temple theology, most notably, *Isaiah* and *Daniel*;

¹⁹ Dubay, "The Indwelling of Divine Love" in: *Letter & Spirit*, 185 (emphasis added).

²⁰ Stephen's speech in *Acts* is a good example of the "*greater than*" theology of the temple: "Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, 'Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest' (*Acts* 7:48-49). The phrase "*made with hands*" is usually in reference to pagan idolatry. E.g. *Wisd.* 14:8; *Judith* 8:18; see: *Deut.* 4:28; *II Ki.* 19:18; *Isa.* 37:19; 44:18; *Bar.* 6:51.

²¹ "The Temple is the seat of Wisdom and the dwelling place of the Most High God." (Hahn, "Introduction," in: *Letter & Spirit*, 7.)

- ... similarly, the vision of exilic and post-exilic prophets, *Ezekiel* and *Zechariah*, would be emptied of their vivid eschatological content apart from temple theology;
- ... any study of “*idolatry*” in Scripture, or of the “*high places*” in Israel presupposes a right understanding of holy worship in the tabernacle / temple;
- ... the destruction of Solomon’s Temple is the defining moment in the life of ancient Israel—and with its re-construction, Jewish “*messianism*” is itself rooted in “the restoration” and “judgment” of the temple.

III. TEMPLE THEOLOGY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. **EVERY PAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.** If the above evidence is not enough, all of which underscores the centrality of the temple in the Old Testament, we quickly add to it *the entire corpus of the New Testament*. Every page bears witness to the profound importance of the Jerusalem Temple.
2. **AT THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL.** Simply put, it is *impossible* to properly understand the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ—or the proclamation of the Gospel message—apart from the reality of the temple.
3. **A NEW MEANING.** The New Testament is deeply indebted to the temple theology of the Old Testament—yet it clearly develops *its own* rich temple theology around Jesus Christ and His Church:
 - **FULFILLING THE OT.** Each of the Four Gospels develop temple theology in unique ways, yet collectively, they clearly present Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the Temple—
 - **THE TRUE TEMPLE.** Jesus appears in the Gospels as One not only in proper relationship to the Temple, *but as the true Temple of the New Covenant itself*; the One who replaces the Temple of the Old Covenant; St. John identifies Jesus as the “*new Temple*.”²²
4. **UNDERSTANDING CHRIST’S MYSTERIES.** Moreover, all of the *mysteries of Christ’s life* within the Gospels which are deeply embedded in the sacred meaning of the Temple:
 - the *Presentation* in the temple;²³
 - the *Finding* in the temple;²⁴
 - his many pilgrimages to the temple;²⁵
 - his critique of temple including the driving out of the merchants from the temple courts;²⁶
 - his prophecies of the temple’s destruction;²⁷
 - and His frequent teaching in the temple;²⁸

²² *John* 2:21-22 “But he spoke of *the Temple of his body*. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; *and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.*”

²³ *Luke* 2:22-39.

²⁴ *Luke* 2:46-49.

²⁵ See: *John* 2:13-14; 5:1, 14; 7:1, 10, 14; 8:2; 10:22-23.

²⁶ *Matt.* 21:23; see: *John* 2:13-22.

²⁷ *Matt.* 24:1-12; *Mark* 13:1-23.

5. **THE LAST SUPPER.** The mystery of the Last Supper—Jesus’ Passover—and above all, His crucifixion, can only be fully grasped against the backdrop of the Temple.²⁹
 - “In his Passion the body of Christ is revealed to be the new temple, from which flows the new river of life. In offering his body and blood for the life of the world, he reveals himself as the new *Lamb of sacrifice* and the *new High Priest*, fulfilling in his person the deepest meanings of the sign of the temple.”³⁰
6. **THE KINGDOM OF GOD.** The *growth* of the Kingdom of God can and should be understood as a fulfillment of the idea that, from the beginning, the temple was intended *to fill the face of the earth*.³¹
7. **TEMPLE GROUPS.** Each of the major Jewish groups of Jesus’ day were, one way or another, *decisively shaped by the temple*:
 - the Sanhedrin and High Priest represent the temple authorities;
 - the Pharisees urged radical temple purity;
 - the Sadducees were the elite class that represent temple hypocrisy;
 - and the Essenes were the sect that rejected the “corrupted temple,” and fervently awaited the messiah’s purification of it;
8. **FROM END TO END.** Luke begins—and ends his *Gospel* in the temple,³² and in *Acts of the Apostles*, he makes a direct identification of Jesus as the new temple;³³
 - Peter’s first sermon in *Acts* 2:34 sets the stage for a sustained engagement / critique of the beliefs of the temple;
 - Pentecost itself³⁵ is a reversal and “righting” of a sinful primordial-temple (Babel);

²⁸ *Matt.* 26:55; *Luke* 19:47; *John* 5:14; 7:28; 8:28; 18:20.

²⁹ *Mark* 15:37-38 “And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed his last. And *the curtain of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.*”

³⁰ Hahn, “Introduction,” in: *Letter & Spirit*, 8.

³¹ As will explained, the growth of the Kingdom of God—a central theme of Jesus’ ministry and teaching—is undergirded by the biblical idea that the Temple was always intended, from the outset in *Genesis*, to be *an expansive entity that covered the earth*, and not merely Mount Zion in Jerusalem. See: *Mark* 4:31-32 “[The kingdom of God] is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown *it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs*, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.” Also: *Dan.* 2:1-49. Particularly helpful is Gregory K. Beale’s important study on the Temple: *The Temple and the Church’s Mission. A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2004): “My thesis is that the Old Testament tabernacle and Temples were symbolically designed to point to the cosmic eschatological reality that God’s tabernacling presence, *formerly limited to the holy of holies, was to be extended throughout the whole earth,*” 25 (emphasis added).

³² See: *Luke* 1:5-2:50 // 24:52-53.

³³ *Acts* 4:12 “This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, but which has become the head of the corner” (See: *Psa.* 118).

³⁴ *Acts* 2:5-47. “Sending his Spirit at Pentecost, he establishes his Church, built on the cornerstone of Christ and the foundation of the apostles, as the true Temple, his Father’s house of many mansions. In the Church, the promise of the Temple is realized. The Church is the house of prayer for all peoples, the holy mountain in which God is worshipped in Spirit and truth. Through the sacramental economy of the Church, the Spirit is given to dwell in believers—divinizing and deifying, making them living stones, Temples of the Holy Spirit,” (Hahn, “Introduction,” in: *Letter & Spirit*, 8.)

- Stephen’s speech and James’ testimony are likewise steeped in temple critiques;³⁶
 - The remainder of the New Testament is replete with temple theology:
9. **THE APOSTLE PAUL.** St. Paul’s epistles are saturated with temple theology, from his opening critique of idolatry in *Romans*³⁷ to his images of the church as the “Temple of the Holy Spirit” in *Corinthians* and *Ephesians*;³⁸ and his urging believers to conduct their lives (and bodies) as a “temple of the Holy Spirit.”³⁹
 10. **HEBREWS AND REVELATION.**
 - The book of Hebrews, perhaps more than any New Testament book, develops a Christology of *Jesus’ eternal high priesthood* that rests upon temple theology;⁴⁰
 - Finally, in his vision in the book of Revelation, St. John envisions a garden-like city in the shape of a Temple—a *new heavens and new earth*.⁴¹
 - The entire book turns on the “worship of the lamb,” a singular image of temple sacrifice—though in *Revelation*, the lamb is “*standing as slain*,”⁴² a direct allusion to the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus, who has Himself become the new light of the new temple.⁴³

IV. OTHER IMPLICATIONS OF TEMPLE THEOLOGY

1. The above biblical topics will be encountered as the course unfolds. Throughout our study, the primary focus will be upon *temple theology as it pertains to Sacred Scripture*.
2. It should be only added that while our theme has important implications for biblical interpretation, there are *other* implications that stretch *even further*, beyond Scripture.
3. While a comprehensive list of such implications cannot be discussed here, the following ten topics are raised in the hopes that such may be pursued as time and interest allow, apart from this course:
 - a. The *ordained priesthood* as it relates to liturgical worship; the priestly office of all baptized Christians; duties and responsibilities of all Christians with respect to *Sacred Liturgy*;
 - b. *Sacramental theology*—and the Jewish roots of the sacramental realities, especially as they relate to the temple;
 - c. Systematic and moral theology—and specifically, questions that pertain to the *Beatific vision*, and how temple theology / biblical theology informs such discussions;

³⁵ *Acts* 2:1-13. This will be discussed in a later chapter.

³⁶ See: *Acts* 6:13-14; 7:48-50; 15:16-17.

³⁷ See: *Rom.* 1:18-25.

³⁸ See: *I Cor.* 3:16-17; *II Cor.* 6:16; *Eph.* 2:21.

³⁹ *I Cor.* 6:19.

⁴⁰ See: *Heb.* 8:1-10:39.

⁴¹ See: *Rev.* 21:1-22:5.

⁴² *Rev.* 5:6.

⁴³ *Rev.* 22:3-5 “There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. And night shall be no more; *they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.*”

- d. The loss of the idea of *'the holy'*—in various precincts of Church life and in contemporary culture;
- e. Confusion about / abstraction of the idea of *'beauty'* and the intrinsically beautiful—in the Church as well as secular society;
- f. The *recovery of sacred art and sacred music / chant*—both in and beyond the liturgy;
- g. *Church architecture*—and the recovery of true and orthodox liturgical renewal according to the magisterial documents of Vatican II (*Sancrosanctum Concilium*);
- h. The proliferation of *'secular worship spaces'* in Protestant Christianity (i.e. 'mega-churches') and the challenges facing the Church as it pertains to the many Roman Catholics who participate in such communities;
- i. The relationship of *Jewish people to contemporary Christians, especially Catholics*—and the effects of salvation / natural history upon such relationships;
- j. The past, present and future of *the 'Temple Mount' in Jerusalem*; its complex history from the period of the Jebusites ... to its final destruction in 70 A.D.—and all subsequent developments / conquests leading up to the present day (i.e., the Dome of the Rock).

V. CONCLUSION

1. All of Israel's hopes in Sacred Scripture anticipate the arrival of the house of God, the Temple. From the *'temple of creation'* in the opening pages of *Genesis*, to the consummation of history at the end of the book of *Revelation*, with the new temple that descends from heaven, all of salvation history is shaped by the reality of the Temple—and God's presence within it. *At the epicenter of this temple story is Jesus Christ—the living temple of the New Covenant.*
2. It is therefore *not only fitting* to describe biblical theology, as, in some sense, 'temple theology'. It is *necessary* to study Sacred Scripture carefully in light of this central and unifying theme, in order to better grasp its profound influence upon the life of ancient Israel and the early Church.
3. Esteemed theologian Yves Congar wrote just prior to Vatican II,
 - **Yves Congar:** "[T]he essential point of God's plan ... could be well formulated in terms of a Temple built of living stones; for God's whole purpose is to make the human race, created in his image, a living, spiritual Temple in which he not only dwells, but to which he communicates himself and in turn receives from it the worship of a wholly filial obedience ... Hence the story of God's relations with his creation, and especially with man, is none other than the story of His ever more generous, ever deeper presence among his creatures."⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Yves Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple* (New York: Newman Press, 1962) ix (emphases added).

THE TEMPLE OF CREATION (I/III)

PART I—THE SACRED MOUNTAIN: THE GARDEN OF EDEN AS A COSMOLOGICAL TEMPLE

“He built his sanctuary like the high heavens,
like the earth, which he has founded forever.”

PSALM 78:69

I. GOD BUILDS HIS HOLY TEMPLE

1. **THE STORY BEGINS.** Where exactly in Scripture does our “temple story” begin? In the tabernacle of the wilderness of Exodus? In its dedication by Solomon? In the temple praise of the *Psalms*? No—much earlier.
2. **IN THE BEGINNING.** It begins with the opening words of the Bible, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*” It runs straight through *Genesis* 1-2 and culminates—negatively—with the expulsion of the Man and Woman from Eden at the end of *Genesis* 3. In brief, *Genesis* 1-3 presents the whole of creation as God’s holy temple:
 - “In the temple we perceive the ‘end,’ the meaning of the salvation history told in the Bible. It is the history of the Father’s gracious self-revelation and sharing of his divine presence with his children. We see this ‘end’ in the beginning, *on the first pages of Scripture, where the world’s creation is carefully depicted as the building of a cosmic Temple, a holy place for God to dwell with his people.*”⁴⁵
3. **OUR THESIS:** Numerous clues from Scripture support the above quotation as wholly accurate.⁴⁶ A close examination of the foundational biblical texts of *Genesis* 1-2 will reveal that the whole of creation—and specifically the Garden of Eden—is a *cosmological sanctuary*. Such depictions are not without precedent; numerous ancient texts both in and beyond Judaism follow along similar paths as *Genesis*.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ S. W. Hahn, “Introduction,” in: *Letter & Spirit: Temple and Contemplation: God’s Presence in the Cosmos, Church, and Human Heart* 4 (2008): 7–8 (emphasis added).

⁴⁶ That the author of *Gen* 1-2 clearly intends this “cosmological temple” reading will be discussed below. Corroborating evidence will be provided in the form of parallel biblical texts, early primary sources as well as insights from contemporary Jewish and Christian scholars.

⁴⁷ See especially: Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 44–66; “God’s Temple City,” in T. Desmond Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 119–33; Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008) 13–73; E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63BCE–66 CE* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), 47–145; Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.—A.D. 135)*, 3 vols., rev. and ed. Geza Vermes, et al. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973, 1979, 1986, 1987), 2:237–313; Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978); Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, trans. F. H. Cave and C. H. Cave (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 21–27, 84–86, 147–221; H. H. Rowley, *Worship in Ancient Israel* (London: S.P.C.K, 1967), 71–110; Yves Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple* (New York: Newman Press, 1962); L. Michael Morales, *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured: Cosmic Mountain Ideology in Genesis and Exodus* (Leuven: Peeters, 2012); Jacob Chanikuzhy, *Jesus the Eschatological Temple* (Leuven: Peeters, 2012); Margaret Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*. 3rd ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2013); Nicholas Perrin, *Jesus the Temple* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012).

II. ADAM, THE HIGH PRIEST OF MT. EDEN

1. **THE CENTER OF CREATION.** That Eden is the *centerpiece* of creation is clear to anyone who carefully reads *Gen.* 1-2. What may be *less evident* to some readers—though no less important—is the reality that Eden is not merely a garden, but a *holy mountain*. *Gen.* 1-2 present Eden as a *sacred mountain* and *archetypal temple*. This “*temple of creation*” belongs to God.
2. **THE INNER SANCTUM.** *Genesis* depicts the home of Adam and Eve as a paradisiacal garden named “Eden,” with its holy “inner sanctum” in the center of the garden—the Tree of Life.⁴⁸ Living waters from four rivers flow down the mountain and fructify the whole of creation.⁴⁹
3. **THE ARCHETYPAL TEMPLE.** Yet, we will show that Eden was more than a garden alone. Properly speaking, Eden is God’s holy mountain, with the garden at its base.
 - This is important, so let us be clear: the garden of *Genesis* sits at the base of God’s holy mountain, ‘Mt. Eden.’ In temple language, its *Holy Place* is in the center of the garden, and the Tree of Life is its *Holy of Holies*.
4. The ancient book of *Jubilees* declares,
 - “[Noah] knew that the garden of Eden was the *Holy of Holies* of the Lord.”⁵⁰
5. **THE DIVINE PRESENCE.** It was created by Him as an icon of heaven, and importantly—it is the primary place where *those with the eyes of faith* encounter the Divine Presence, such that those who live by faith receive God’s divine life, and a divine mission to sanctify the world *beyond Eden*, that the temple would grow as the faithful multiply.
6. **THE ARCHETYPAL HIGH PRIEST.** Temples are not without priests; as such, the first man, Adam, serves as the archetypal high priest of Eden, chosen by God to have stewardship over the Temple. As *guardian-priest* of Eden, he was charged with preserving the holiness of the temple, for all who dwell within its sacred space.
7. **MOTHER OF THE LIVING.** Similarly, his vocation required keeping out those who maliciously threaten the holiness of the temple. In some sense, Eve, “*mother of the living*,”⁵¹ shares in his priestly dignity—though it is he alone who is tasked with specifically priestly responsibilities.
8. **THE FOUNDATION OF THIS ENTIRE COURSE.** *The identity of Eden as a cosmological Temple—and Adam as its high priest—establishes our foundation of temple theology, upon which our larger study rests.*⁵²
 - More specifically, the identity of Eden as an archetypal temple introduces the biblical reader to the language and symbolism of “*creation theology*” which unfolds across the pages of both the Old and New Testaments.⁵³

⁴⁸ *Gen.* 2:9; see: 3:22, 24.

⁴⁹ See: *Gen.* 2:10-14.

⁵⁰ *Jubilees*, 8:19. See: James Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 73.

⁵¹ *Gen.* 3:20.

⁵² As discussed in the previous session, the evidence for a “temple theology” reading of Sacred Scripture advances far beyond the text of *Genesis* 1-2.

⁵³ The present topic focuses primarily on OT texts (and *Genesis* in particular). A few ideas will be sketched out which point the reader towards apprehending creation theology in the New Testament as well.

- In what follows, we will examine **4 major lines of evidence** from Scripture—each of which indicate that the opening chapters *Genesis* decidedly present the whole of creation as a cosmological Temple—and more specifically, with Eden as its *Holy Place*, Adam as its priest, and the Tree of Life as the *Holy of Holies*.

III. EDEN, THE COSMIC TEMPLE.

1. **EDEN – THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD:** That Eden is a mountain—and not merely a Garden— may come as a surprise to some. Yet, a careful reading of *Genesis 2* reveals that the paradise of Eden is actually atop a mountain, from which four rivers flow out (i.e. downward) and fructify the earth:
 - **Gen. 2:10-14** “*A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.*”
2. **EZEKIEL’S INSIGHT.** Supporting this is a key text from *Ezekiel*, in which Eden is paralleled with the “holy mountain of God”:
 - **Ezek. 28:13-14** “*You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, carnelian, topaz, and jasper, chrysolite, beryl, and onyx, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald; and wrought in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. With an anointed guardian cherub I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.*”
3. Thus, *Ezekiel* assumes the garden in Eden lies atop a *holy mountain*:
 - “The garden of Eden is not viewed by the author of *Genesis* simply as a piece of Mediterranean farmland, but as an *archetypal sanctuary*, that is *a place where God dwells* and where man should worship him. Many of the features of the garden may also be found in later sanctuaries, particularly the tabernacle or Jerusalem temple. These parallels suggest that the garden itself is understood as a sort of sanctuary.”⁵⁴

IV. THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD, THE COVENANT OF GOD.

1. **MEETING WITH GOD.** A key insight related to the “*Eden-as-mountain-of-God*” motif is the idea that it is *upon mountains that God meets with—and covenants with His people*. This is the definitive pattern throughout salvation history:
 - *God covenants with Adam* (and Eve) in the garden of Mt. Eden (*Gen. 1-2*).⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Gordon Wenham, “Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story,” in: *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* 9 (1986), 19. See also: T. Desmond Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 20-31.

⁵⁵ The language of “covenant” *Hebrew*: berith) is not explicit, yet all the dimensions of the covenant are present in these chapters. See: J. Milgrom, “Covenants: The Sinaitic and Patriarchal Covenants in the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17–27),” in *Sefer Moshe: The Moshe Weinfeld Jubilee Volume* (ed. C. Cohen et al.; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004) 91–101; S. W. Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: a Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God’s Saving Promises* (London: Yale University Press, 2009), 10.

- *God covenants with Noah* (and his family) on Mt. Ararat (*Gen.* 8:4, 9:1-8-17).
 - *God covenants with Abraham* (and his descendants) on Mt. Moriah, after the “sacrifice” of Isaac (*Gen.* 22; 12:1-3; 17:1-21).
 - *God covenants with Moses* (and the Israelites) on Mt. Sinai (*Exod.* 20-24).⁵⁶
 - *God covenants with David* (and “the son of David”)—an everlasting covenant, on Mt. Zion (*II Sam.* 7:12-13).⁵⁷ Strikingly, this is the precise location of God’s covenant with Abraham—Mt. Moriah is Mt. Zion; as the *Chronicler* reveals.⁵⁸
2. **MT. CALVARY.** Finally, *God covenants with the world through His one divine mediator, Jesus Christ*—on Mt. Calvary.⁵⁹ As such, the new and definitive covenant rests upon the foundation of the covenants of the Old Testament, through various *human mediators* (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and David) on *mountains*. Only now, it is the everlasting covenant, not written on tablets of stone, but on human hearts:
- **Jer. 31:31-33** “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, *not like the covenant which I made with their fathers* when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

⁵⁶ *Exod.* 24:8, 15 “And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, “*Behold the blood of the covenant* which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words ... Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. *The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai*, and the cloud covered it six days; and on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.”

⁵⁷ *II Sam.* 7:10-16 “And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that *the LORD will make you a house*. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. *He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever*. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. When he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men; but I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. *And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established forever.*”

⁵⁸ *II Chron.* 3:1 “Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.” See: S. W. Hahn, *The Kingdom of God as Liturgical Empire. A Theological Commentary on 1-2 Chronicles* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 112ff. “The detail that the temple was built on Mount Moriah *ties the temple to the most important sacrifice in Israel’s sacred history*, Abraham’s binding of Isaac, the Akedah, *which occurred on an unspecified mount in the land of Moriah*. In later Jewish tradition, this tradition is *commonplace* and is connected with *another* tradition—the ram sacrificed in the place of Isaac remained at Moriah for many generations ... It seems unlikely that the *Chronicler* himself is the source of traditions about Moriah and the ashes; more likely he was aware of some ancient form of these traditions in developing his account” (p. 112).

⁵⁹ *Luke* 22:20 “And likewise the cup after supper, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is *the new covenant in my blood.*”

V. A THREE-FOLD PATTERN OF THE CREATED WORLD

1. **THREE MAIN PARTS.** In future essays, we will discuss how Israel's Temple was comprised of three main parts:
 - (i) The *Outer Courts*;
 - (ii) The *Holy Place*;
 - (iii) The *Holy of Holies*.
2. **THREEFOLD PATTERN OF CREATION.** Each of these three parts corresponds to a threefold pattern of creation, as depicted in *Genesis 1-2*.⁶⁰
3. **THE OUTER COURTS**—corresponds to the land beyond the Garden, that is was created good, but is nevertheless wild and unruly in comparison to the order of the Garden.
 - This rests upon a core biblical principle: God is holy, and anything / anyone that is nearest to Him must be holy. Hence, the outer courts represent the outer regions of the earth beyond the Mountain / Garden.
 - “The land and seas to be subdued by Adam outside the Garden were roughly equivalent to the outer court of Israel's subsequent temple. Thus, one may be able to perceive an increasing gradation in holiness from outside the garden proceeding inward: the region outside the Garden is related to God and is “very good” (*Gen. 1:31*) in that it is God's creation (= **the outer court**) ...”⁶¹
4. **THE HOLY PLACE**—corresponds to the Garden and everything within its boundaries.
5. **THE MOST HOLY PLACE**—corresponds to Mt. Eden, the place where God dwells.
6. **PLACED IN THE GARDEN.** This is the place where God “*put the man*” (*Gen. 2:8*) and where he and woman dwell and serve God. It should strike us that the Serpent suddenly out of the blue; he is a “*stranger*” to the Garden, a threat from the wilds beyond the Garden.
 - “Israel's temple was the place where the priest experienced God's unique presence, and Eden was the place where Adam walked and talked with God. The same Hebrew verbal form (stem) *mithallék* used for God's ‘walking back and forth’ in the Garden,⁶² also describes God's presence in the tabernacle.”⁶³
 - **Ratzinger:** “God's name” means: God present among men. It is said of the Temple in Jerusalem that God “[made] his name dwell” there (*Deut. 12:11*, and elsewhere). *Israel would never have dared to say simply: God lives there.* Israel knew that God is infinitely great, that he surpasses and embraces the whole world.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰ See: Beale, “General Symbolism of the Temple” in: *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 32-36.

⁶¹ Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 75. .

⁶² See: *Gen. 3:8*.

⁶³ Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 66. See: *Lev. 26:12* “And I will *walk among you*, and will be your God, and you shall be my people.”

⁶⁴ Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 91.

V. THE DEEPER MEANING OF EDEN

1. **GETTING BEYOND ‘TWO DIMENSIONS.’** All of us carry images of Eden in our heads. Eden is a cultural as well as a biblical motif—and the two do not always correspond well. For many of us, the image in our mind is of a paradise, as the Bible describes.
 - Unfortunately, our imagination, is often formed more by cultural misconceptions, is led astray—just as it is in regard to understandings of heaven.
 - Too often, a rather whimsical, overly simplistic portrait is foisted upon the biblical text ... with two naked, rather naïve individuals prancing around a tree. Such is a two-dimensional drawing, the sort of picture a child might draw, not the reality of *God’s inspired Word*.
2. **THE BIBLICAL VISION OF EDEN.** The true vision of Eden in Scripture is vastly and altogether different:
 - a. It is a *robustly alive landscape*, with rays of morning sunlight streaming down upon majestic, three-dimensional, living beings.
 - b. Birdsong fills the crisp air, and our attention is drawn to the beauty and splendor of the man and the woman, united in a living and human embrace.
3. **THE SPLENDOR OF EDEN.** No human words can fully describe or comprehend *the splendor of Eden*. However, the depiction offered in the hymn of St. Ephrem brings us closer to the biblical reality:

- Ephrem the Syrian:

“Joyfully did I embark
on the take of Paradise—
*a tale that is short to read
but rich to explore.*
My tongue read the story’s
outward narrative,
while my intellect took wing
and soared upward in awe
*as it perceived the splendor of Paradise—
not indeed as it really is
but insofar as humanity
is granted to comprehend it.*

With the eye of my mind
I gazed upon paradise;
*The summit of every mountain
Is lower than its summit,*
The crest of the Flood
Reached only its foothills;
*these it kissed with reverence
before turning back*
to rise above and subdue the peak
of every hill and mountain
*The foothills of Paradise it kisses
While every summit it buffets.*

Not that the ascent to Paradise
Is arduous because of its height,

For those who inherit it
Experience no toil there.
With its beauty it joyfully
urges on those who ascend.
Amidst glorious rays
It lies resplendent,
all fragrant with its scents;
magnificent clouds
fashion the abodes
of those who are worthy of it.”⁶⁵

4. **THE MYSTERY OF CREATION.** As St. Ephrem understood, the deepest meaning of Eden is a great mystery that one ascends towards, even if it cannot be fully grasped with human knowledge. Likewise, St. Paul recognized that the image of the Man and the Woman—in the one-flesh union, was a profound mystery that somehow transcends the brief narrative of *Genesis*:
 - **Eph. 5:31-33** “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ *This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the church;* however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”
5. **THE MYSTERY OF THE BODY.** Likewise, concerning the Man and the Woman, Saint Pope John Paul II expressed,
 - “When both unite so intimately with each other that they become “one flesh,” their conjugal union presupposes a mature consciousness of the body. Better yet, this union *carries within itself a particular awareness of the meaning of that body in the reciprocal self-gift of the persons.* In this sense, too, *Genesis 2:24* is a future-oriented text. It shows, in fact, that in every conjugal union of man and woman, *there is a new discovery of the same original consciousness of the unitive meaning of the body in its masculinity and femininity ... each union of this kind renews in some way the mystery of creation* in all its original depth and vital power ... Procreation is rooted in creation, and every time it reproduces in some way its mystery.”⁶⁶

VI. A BLUEPRINT OF EDEN

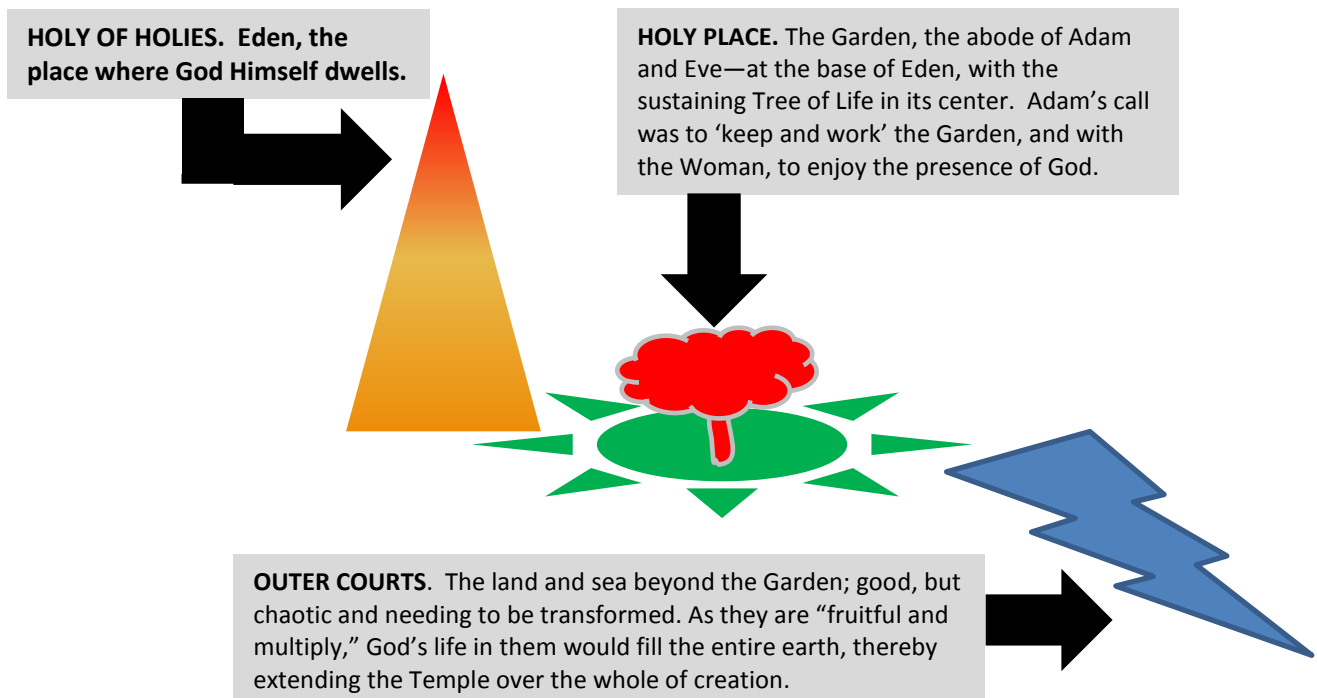
1. **BEYOND MISCONCEPTIONS.** As the above quotations reflect, our image of Eden must go beyond the misconceptions of cultural depictions and that of our own imagination.
 - a. As noted, Eden is not, properly speaking, a single place—something one can “*draw a circle around,*” or quickly sketch out on a piece of paper.
 - b. Rather, in Scripture, Eden is a complex environment comprised of several distinct regions, surrounded by the world beyond it:
2. **A THREE-FOLD REALITY.** Whereas we popularly think of the Garden of Eden as a single entity, it is really a three-fold reality:
 - a. Eden is the *Holy of Holies*;

⁶⁵ St. Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, 78-79 [Hymn II, para. 3, 4, 5].

⁶⁶ John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. Michael Waldstein (Boston, MA: Pauline Books & Media, 2006), 169.

- b. The Garden is the *Holy Place*;
 - c. Finally, the world beyond the Garden is the *Outer Courts*.
3. **MT. EDEN.** Eden is where God dwells (= Holy of Holies) as the source of both physical and spiritual life (symbolized by the waters).⁶⁷ It is the mountain-abode of God Himself;⁶⁷
 4. **THE GARDEN.** “The Garden itself is a *sacred space separate from the outer world* (= the Holy Place), where *God’s priestly servant worships God by obeying him, by cultivating and guarding ...*”⁶⁸ The Garden is the home of Adam and Eve, sustained by the love of God and nourished by His immortal life, the Tree of Life;
 5. **THE WILD WORLD BEYOND.** Finally, beyond the mountain of Eden—the dwelling place of God, and its adjacent Garden paradise—is *the world beyond* (= the Outer Courts).
 - a. Though created by God, and therefore “good,” the world beyond is also *wild and in need of being subdued*.
 - b. As such, it is the “mission field” of Adam and Eve. In fulfilling God’s command to “*be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*”⁶⁹ their priestly presence would radiate outward, extending God’s temple over the furthest regions of the earth.

ILLUSTRATION 1: A MAP OF EDEN



⁶⁷ “Eden is the source of the waters and [is the palatial] residence of God; and the garden adjoins God’s residence.” John Walton, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan), 167.

⁶⁸ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 75.

⁶⁹ *Gen.* 1:28.

VII. HOW ONE APPROACHES GOD ACCORDING TO THIS PATTERN:

1. **APPROACHING THE DIVINE PRESENCE.** “At the heart of the theology of the Bible is ... its principle theme: the dwelling of the Divine Presence. ... This theme is given historical movement and literary expression through a particular pattern of approaching God: through the waters → to the mountain of God → for “worship,” that is, for the abundant life of the Divine Presence.”⁷⁰
2. **THE ARCHETYPAL MOUNTAIN.** “Eden ... may be considered an *archetype* for the cosmic mountain [and] the foremost world mountain for Israel. Further, the Israelite cultus of the tabernacle / temple – and specifically the Sabbath ... opened the way to that Edenic reality.”⁷¹
 - **Wisd. 9:8** “Thou hast given command to build a temple on thy holy mountain, and an altar in the city of thy habitation, a copy of the holy tent which thou didst prepare from the beginning.”
3. **THE ONE OF THE MOUNTAIN.** The oldest name for God in Israel is *El Shaddai*, often translated “*mighty God*” or “*God Almighty*,” but more accurately, “*El, the one of the mountain*.”⁷²

⁷⁰ L. Michael Morales, *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured: Cosmic Mountain Ideology in Genesis and Exodus* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2012), 1.

⁷¹ Morales, *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, 16. The connection between temple / mountain, Sabbath and covenant are seen clearly in Isa. 56:6-7: “*Everyone who keeps the Sabbath, and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.*”

⁷² *I Ki.* 20:28-29 “And a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Because the Syrians have said, “*The Lord is a god of the hills but he is not a god of the valleys,*” therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the Lord.’” And they encamped opposite one another *seven days*. Then *on the seventh day* the battle was joined; and the people of Israel smote of the Syrians a hundred thousand foot soldiers in one day.” Note the occurrence of “seven” following *El Shaddai*; more will be said about the significance of “seven” in a subsequent discussion.

THE TEMPLE OF CREATION (II/III)

PART II—THE SACRED SPACE OF THE GARDEN TEMPLE

“One thing have I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after;
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the LORD,
and to inquire in his temple.”

P S A L M 7 8 : 6 9

I. DELIVERANCE FROM THE COSMIC WATERS BENEATH THE TEMPLE.

1. **SACRED MOUNTAINS /PROTO-TEMPLES.** As we have seen, the space of the Garden was sacred, and the waters that flowed down from the mountain of Eden, where God dwells, watered the garden and fructify the land and seas beyond.⁷³
 - a. In the ancient Near East, sacred mountains were “proto-temples.” They were typically seen as situated above the primordial waters of creation and chaos [i.e. outer courts].
 - b. In this sense, water had a dual power: *life / creation* and *death/destruction*. The sacred mountain was the source of the sacred water, which replenished the four corners of the earth. This imagery symbolized the tranquility and peace of God, and the blessing of life, food, etc.
2. **LIVING WATERS.** If the foil of *Gen.* 1 is the “watery chaos” from which God creates *ex nihilo*, then the mountain of Eden, the center highest place on earth, becomes the place from which *the living waters flow* ... watering the garden, and the world beyond.⁷⁴
 - a. Just as the rivers flow down and out of Eden,⁷⁵ so also the Temple envisioned by the book of *Ezekiel*⁷⁶ and the book of *Revelation*⁷⁷ have water flowing from them.

⁷³ *Gen.* 2:10-14 “A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.” See also: *Gen.* 1:2 “The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters;” *Psa.* 24:1-3 “The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein; for he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers;” *Psa.* 18:16 “He reached from on high, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.”

⁷⁴ Jon Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis, Winston Press, 1985), 28-29.

⁷⁵ *Gen.* 2:10-14.

⁷⁶ *Ezek.* 47:1-12.

⁷⁷ *Rev.* 21:1-2.

- b. In Jesus' day, the Second Temple, just as the first, was constructed just above the Gihon Spring, which [among other functions] provided water to rinse away blood from the Temple sacrifices.
- c. At Passover, there would have been a river of *blood and water flowing from the Temple*.⁷⁸
- d. Jesus speaks to the Samaritan woman of "*living water*,"⁷⁹ fulfilling in part Zechariah's vision of the Messiah. According to the prophet's vision, upon the "*day of the Lord*," and specifically, upon the Feast of Tabernacles, "living waters" would flow from the Temple and "water" all of Jerusalem.⁸⁰
3. **ABOVE THE PRIMEVAL WATERS.** "... The reason such springs exist in temples is that they are perceived as the primeval waters of creation, Nun in Egypt, Abzu in Mesopotamia. The temple is thus founded on and stands in contact with primeval waters."⁸¹
4. **EX NIHILO.** God creates the heavens and earth *ex nihilo*, out of the watery chaos, and placing Adam atop the Edenic mountain, enjoying His Divine Presence.
5. **SANCTUM SANCTORUM.** Thus, in Scripture, the mountain of Eden is God's *sanctum sanctorum*, in which the Divine Presence abides. Thus, the mountain represents *heaven—the holy of holies*. Below the Garden [*Holy Place*] and the world beyond [Outer Courts] are the depths of the sea, or *Sheol*:
6. **THE PSALMS.** Such cosmology is likewise in a number of ancient Near East and Old Testament texts. The *Psalms* often celebrate God's omnipresence – and deliverance in just this fashion:
- **Psa. 139:8-10:**
 "If I *ascend to heaven*, thou art there!
 If I make my bed in *Sheol*, thou art there!
 If I take the wings of the morning
 and dwell in *the uttermost parts of the sea*,
 even there thy hand shall lead me,
 and thy right hand shall hold me."
 - **Amos 9:2-3:**
 "Though they *dig into Sheol*,
 from there shall my hand take them;
 though they *climb up to heaven*,
 from there I will bring them down.
 Though they hide themselves *on the top of Carmel*, from there I will search out
 and take them;
 and though they hide from my sight *at the bottom of the sea*,
 there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them."

⁷⁸ *John* 19:34 "But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water."

⁷⁹ *John* 4:10 "Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you *living water*.'" See also: *John* 7:38.

⁸⁰ *Zech.* 14:8 "On that day *living waters* shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter."

⁸¹ J. M. Lundquist, "What is a Temple: A Preliminary Typology" (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns), 208.

7. **THE GOD WHO DELIVERS FROM THE WATERS.** In other words, underneath Eden’s three-fold structure lies *Sheol*, i.e. the waters of chaos. Still, God’s control of the waters includes *the power to rescue souls from it*.⁸²
 - a. Above all is the figure of **Noah**. Noah is remembered by God for his righteousness— and saved through the waters of the Flood.⁸³
 - b. The pattern in the *Psalms* is that the psalmist is beset by raging waters, and at the same time, *accursed by his enemies*. He protests his innocence/ righteousness, beseeching God for deliverance; the psalmist is drawn out of this calamity to safety.
 - c. For the “redeemed individual,” a *liturgical act of worship follows*, in which God is praised for His deliverance.⁸⁴

II. GATE LITURGIES (WHO MAY ENTER THE SACRED TEMPLE / MOUNTAIN)

1. **ENTER THE RIGHTEOUS.** Closely associated with the sacred mountains in the ancient Near East is the concept of “*gate liturgies*” at these temple-mountains. The idea is that only the righteous may enter; the *unrighteous* may not enter / is cast out.
2. **THROUGH THE TEMPLE DOORS.** One scholar writes, “There are reasons why temple doors were considered important. They represent the entrance to the holy place, and the ‘gate’ was often used in pictures as a symbol of the temple itself ... the door was the symbol for a central point ... *the meeting place between god and man*.”⁸⁵
3. **TO KEEP AWAY THE WRONG DOER.** Protecting the divine abode from profanation was the function of temple guardians in the ANE (guards, lions, angels, cherubim, etc.) The Gudea Cylinder⁸⁶ has the inscription over the door, “*To admit the righteous, to keep away the wrong doer.*” This motif is seen in the *Psalms*:

*“Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false,
and does not swear deceitfully.”*⁸⁷
4. **‘CUT OFF.’** In *Genesis* 1, Adam is placed in the garden – and so is righteous. He enjoys the Divine Presence. Once he (and Eve with him) sin, he is cast out of Eden, and is “cut off” from the Divine Presence and the Tree of Life:
 - **Gen. 3:23-24** “Therefore the Lord God sent him forth *from the garden of Eden*, to till the ground from which he was taken. *He drove out the man*; and at the east of the garden of Eden *he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.*”

⁸² See: *Psa.* 18; 66; 69; 88; 122; 144; *II Sam* 22, etc.

⁸³ *Gen.* 8:1-4 “*But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, and the waters receded from the earth continually.* At the end of a hundred and fifty days the waters had abated; and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest upon the mountains of Ararat.”

⁸⁴ See: Morales, *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, 20-32 for more.

⁸⁵ Morales, *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, 35.

⁸⁶ An ancient Sumerian text.

⁸⁷ *Psa.* 24:3-6.

5. **CULTIVATE AND GUARD.** “After telling Adam to ‘cultivate’ and guard / keep’ in *Genesis* 2:15, God gives him a specific ‘command’ in verse 16. The notion of divine ‘commanding’ (*sarwâ*) or giving of ‘commandments’ (*miswôt*) not untypically follows the word ‘guard/keep’ (*shamār*) elsewhere, and in *I Kings* 9:6 (below) when both ‘serving’ and ‘keeping’ occur together, the idea of ‘commandments to be kept’ is in view ...”⁸⁸
- “[This passage] is addressed to Solomon and his sons *immediately after* he had ‘finished building the house of the Lord’ (*I Ki.* 9:1): if they do not *keep* My commandments ... and [instead] *serve* other gods ... **I will cut off** Israel from the land ... and the [Temple] ... I will **cast them out** of my sight ... Accordingly, Adam’s disobedience, as Israel’s, results in his being cut off from the sacred land of the Garden ...”⁸⁹
6. **TEMPLE GATEKEEPERS.** “It is apparent that *priestly obligations in Israel’s later Temple* including the duty of ‘guarding’ unclean things from entering ... and this appears to be relevant for Adam, especially in view of the unclean creature lurking on the perimeter of the Garden and who then enters.”⁹⁰
- “Adam’s *priestly role* of ‘guarding’ (*shamār*) the Garden sanctuary may also be reflected in the later role of Israel’s priests who were called ‘**guards**’ (*I Chron.* 9:23) and repeatedly were referred to as *temple ‘gatekeepers*’⁹¹ who ‘kept watch’ (*shamār*) at the gates (*Neh.* 11:19) so that ‘*no one should enter who is in anyway unclean*’ (*II Chron.* 23:19). Consequently, *the priestly role* in both the Garden and the later Temple was to [maintain] order and keeping out uncleanness.”⁹²
7. **ENTERING FOR LITURGY.** As the Old Testament story progresses, this “gatekeeping” pattern reemerges often. It is the one who pursues righteous who is “*admitted,*” i.e. enters the temple and participates in its liturgies.
- **Isa. 26:2** “*Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps faith may enter in.*”
 - **Psa. 118:19-20** “*Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.*”
 - **Exod. 15:17** “*Thou wilt bring them in, and plant them on thy own mountain, the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thy abode, the sanctuary, Lord, which thy hands have established.*”
8. **APPLYING THESE INSIGHTS TO SCRIPTURE.** All of this has enormous implications for how to make sense of *Genesis* but also, the complete story of the Old Testament (and New Testament):

⁸⁸ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 68-69 (emphases added.)

⁸⁹ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 69 (emphases added).

⁹⁰ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 69 (emphases added).

⁹¹ E.g. *I Chron.* 9:17-18 “*The gatekeepers were: Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their kinsmen (Shallum being the chief),¹⁸ stationed hitherto in the king’s gate on the east side. These were the gatekeepers of the camp of the Levites;” I Chron.* 9:24 “*The gatekeepers were on the four sides, east, west, north, and south; and their kinsmen who were in their villages were obliged to come in every seven days, from time to time, to be with these; for the four chief gatekeepers, who were Levites, were in charge of the chambers and the treasures of the house of God.*”

⁹² Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 69 (emphases added).

- *Negatively*—the **Tower of Babel** is a flagrant attempt to fashion a human replica of Eden, and a pre-figurement of the sin of idolatry (think: Golden Calf, “high places” [pagan altars], serving other gods, etc.)
 - *Positively*—the various **courts of the Temple** reflect nearness to God: the *Court of the Gentiles* (“the world”) the *Court of Women* (Israel), the *Holy Place* (priests) and the Holy of Holies (high priest).
9. **THROUGH THE WATERS ... TO THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD.** The “entrance into the promised land” can be viewed in a temple context, as the Israelites *pass through the waters* of the Jordan and come to the mountain of God:
- **Deut. 12:10-11** “*But when you go over the Jordan [through the waters] and live in the land which the Lord your God gives you to inherit [to the holy mountain], and when he gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you live in safety, then to the place which the Lord your God will choose, to make his name dwell there, thither you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the offering that you present, and all your votive offerings which you vow to the Lord.*”
10. **SUMMARY:**
- a. Temple cults of the ancient Near East, and particularly Israel, can be conceived as sacred mountains in which the Divine Presence is experienced.
 - b. Eden is the first and foremost of many mountain temples which are depicted in such a cosmological way (Likewise, Mt. Sinai, Mt. Zion, etc.)
 - c. As we will see, Adam is presented as the “*high priest of the temple*” and the prototype for the subsequent priesthood of the Israel’s later tabernacles/temple.
 - d. The idea of “entering in” to the holy temple is established in *Genesis* and repeated often throughout the OT. The notion of “gate liturgies” is built upon the presentation of *Gen.* 1-3, and provides a primary pattern of righteous and holiness (i.e. “cut off”).

III. THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE AS A RE-CREATION OF THE EDENIC TEMPLE.

1. **RECAPITULATING EDEN.** Beale convincingly argues that Israel’s tabernacles and temples were a *recapitulation* of the first temple, i.e. the Garden of Eden / Edenic temple.⁹³ Some of the more important datum in Beale’s work are as follows:
 - a. **Eden / Temple is the unique dwelling place of God.** God’s “*walking back and forth*” in the garden utilizes the Hebrew verb *mithallek*, the same verb used elsewhere to describe God’s presence in the Temple.⁹⁴
 - b. **Eden as the Place of the First Priest.** What is a temple without a priest? *Gen* 2:15 states that God placed Adam in Eden to “till” (*abad*) and “keep” (*shamar*) it. When ‘*abad* and *shamar* occur together in the OT they always refer to keeping/guarding and serving God’s word and priestly duties in the tabernacle:
 - *Num.* 3:7-8⁹⁵ “They shall *keep* [*shamar*] guard over him and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister at the tabernacle. They

⁹³ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 66-80.

⁹⁴ Compare *Gen.* 3:8 with *Lev.* 26:12; and *Deut.* 23:14-15 with *II Sam.* 7:6-7.

⁹⁵ English Standard Version ESV].

shall guard all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister [‘*abad*’] at the tabernacle.⁹⁶

2. **ADAM’S FAILURE.** In fact, ‘*abad* and *shamar*’ only occur together again in the Pentateuch in the descriptions in Numbers for the Levites’ activities in the tabernacle.⁹⁷
 - a. Adam *fails the test* as the gatekeeper of the temple, allowing unrighteousness to enter. Thus, he and the woman are expelled.
 - b. *Similarly, the Ark of the Covenant is “guarded” by two cherubim, stationed on either side and placed in the holy of holies.*⁹⁸
3. **EDEN: THE PLACE OF WISDOM AND LIGHT.** Eden was the place of the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*; likewise, the *Holy of Holies* was the place in which the Ark was kept, and within it, the Torah, which was *wisdom and light for all*. Similarly, the *menorah* of the Temple was reminiscent of the *Tree of Life*—a small, flowering tree with seven protruding branches.⁹⁹
4. **EDEN: A GARDEN PARADISE.** Solomon’s Temple is described with botanical and arboreal imagery, giving it an Eden-like appearance. Throughout the Temple, there were wood-carved gourds and flowers,¹⁰⁰ pomegranates,¹⁰¹ and bronze sea.¹⁰² Likewise, as in Eden, there were precious stones, numerous items fashioned of gold,¹⁰³ as were the floors, walls and ceilings. The high priest’s garments were constructed of gold and onyx.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁶ Other examples: *Num.* 8:25-26; 18:5-6; *I Chron.* 23:32; *Ezek.* 44:14.

⁹⁷ *Midrash Rabbah Genesis* interprets Adam’s role in *Gen* 2:15 as offering the kinds of “sacrifices” later required by Mosaic Law. See also: *Epistle of Barnabas* 4:11, 6 for similar connotations.

⁹⁸ See: *Exod.* 25:18-22.

⁹⁹ *Exod.* 25:31-36 “And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The base and the shaft of the lampstand shall be made of hammered work; its cups, its capitals, and its flowers shall be of one piece with it; and there shall be six branches [6 the center = 7] going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it ... so for the six branches going out of the lampstand; and on the lampstand itself four cups made like almonds, with their capitals and flowers ...going out from the lampstand ... *the whole of it one piece of hammered work of pure gold.*”

¹⁰⁰ *I Ki.* 6:29 “He carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubim and *palm trees and open flowers*, in the inner and outer rooms.”

¹⁰¹ *I Ki.* 7:20 “... There were *two hundred pomegranates*, in two rows round about; and so with the other capital.”

¹⁰² *I Ki.* 7:24-26. “Under its brim were gourds, for thirty cubits, *compassing the sea round about* ... It stood upon *twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east*; the sea was set upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward. Its thickness was a handbreadth; and its brim was made like the brim of a cup, *like the flower of a lily*; it held two thousand baths.¹⁰²”

¹⁰³ *I Ki.* 6:20-22 “The inner sanctuary ... overlaid with *pure gold*. He also made an altar of cedar. And Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with *pure gold*, and he drew *chains of gold* across, in front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it *with gold*. And he overlaid the whole house *with gold*, until all the house was finished. Also the whole altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary he overlaid *with gold.*”

¹⁰⁴ *Exod.* 25:7, 28:6-27; *I Chron.* 29:2 “So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood, besides great quantities of onyx and stones for setting, antimony, colored stones, all sorts of precious stones, and marble.”

IV. CONCLUSION

1. As we will see, these Eden / Temple patterns not only provide us with an interpretative key for reading the Old Testament—but help us to make fuller sense of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.
2. Jesus is the eschatological Temple of the New Creation:
 - “The Old Testament tabernacles and temples were symbolically designed to point [back] to the cosmic reality that *God’s tabernacling presence*, formerly limited to the holy of holies formerly limited to the holy of holies, was to be extended through the whole earth [see: *Revelation 21*].¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 74-75: “It may even be discernible that there was a sanctuary and a holy place in Eden corresponding roughly to that in Israel’s later temple. The Garden should be viewed as not itself the source of water but adjoining Eden because *Gen 2:10* says, .a river flowed out of Eden to water the Garden. Therefore, in the same manner that ancient palaces were adjoined by gardens, Eden is the sources of the waters and [is the palatial] residence of God, and the garden adjoins God’s residence. Similarly, *Ezek. 47:1* says that water would flow out from under the holy of holies in the future eschatological temple and would water the earth around. Similarly, in the end-time temple of *Revelation 22:1-2* there is portrayed .a river of the water of life, coming *from the throne of God and of the Lamb*, and flowing into a garden-like grove, which has been modeled on the first paradise in *Genesis 2*, as has been much of *Ezekiel’s* portrayal. If *Ezekiel* and *Revelation* are developments of the first garden-temple, then Eden, the area where the source of water is located, may be comparable to the inner sanctuary of Israel’s later temple and the adjoining garden to the holy place. Eden and its adjoining garden formed two distinct regions. This is compatible with [the] identification of the lampstand in the holy place of the temple with the tree of life located in the fertile plot outside the inner place of God’s presence. Additionally, the bread of the presence, also in the *Holy Place*, which provided food for the priests, would appear to reflect the food produced in the Garden for Adam’s sustenance . . . the land and seas to be subdued by Adam outside the Garden were roughly equivalent to the outer court of Israel’s subsequent temple. Thus, one may be able to perceive an increasing gradation in holiness from outside the garden proceeding inward: the region outside the garden is related to God and is very good. *Gen. 1:31*) in that it is God’s creation (= the outer court); the garden itself is a sacred space separate from the outer world (= the holy place), where God’s priestly servant worships God by obeying him, by cultivating and guarding; Eden is where God dwells (= the holy of holies) as the source of both physical and spiritual life (symbolized by the waters).”

THE TEMPLE OF CREATION (III/III)

PART III—THE MYSTERY OF ‘7’ AND THE HOLY TEMPLE

“He built his sanctuary like the high heavens,
like the earth, which he has founded forever.”

PSALM 78:69

I. ‘7’: THE NUMBER OF PERFECTION, THE NUMBER OF THE COVENANT:

1. ‘7’ The number seven is crucial for unlocking the deeper meaning of *Genesis* 1:
 - a. In the ancient near east, seven is widely-regarded as the number of “perfection.”¹⁰⁶ However, in Sacred Scripture, it holds a second meaning of equal value to that of perfection ... *seven* is the key number relating to *covenant*.
 - b. The Hebrew terms for “oath”¹⁰⁷ and “covenant”¹⁰⁸ frequently function as synonyms.¹⁰⁹
2. COVENANT. As such, in Scripture, seven signifies *not only* “perfection” *but also* the idea of “covenant,” as in God’s covenant with Abraham (and his children).
 - “The binding force of covenant oaths is divine power that immutably abides. *God’s faithfulness* ensures not only the availability of the requisite power to perform a sworn duty but also *the blessing for a faithful performance*. Conversely, when a sworn duty remains unfulfilled, the oath ensures divine retribution, that is, covenant curses.”¹¹⁰
3. ‘7’: THE NUMBER OF THE SABBATH. Beyond signifying “perfection” and “covenant,” seven has a *third* layer of meaning: *Sabbath*.
 - a. In Hebrew, “seven” is the number of the day which we know as *Shabbat* (“sabbath”), the pinnacle of creation.
 - b. The seventh day is set apart from all other days—as the day in which God “rested,” having brought His creation to perfection.

¹⁰⁶ See: Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis Part I: From Adam to Noah: Genesis I-VI*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961 [1944]), 12-13; Carol L. Meyers, *The Tabernacle Menorah: A Synthetic Study of a Symbol from the Biblical Cult, American Schools of Oriental Research Dissertation Series Number 2* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1976), 107.

¹⁰⁷ Hebrew, *shebū‘ ā*, or the verb *nišba‘*, “to swear.”

¹⁰⁸ Hebrew, *bērīt*.

¹⁰⁹ See: S. W. Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: A Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God’s Saving Promises* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2009), 108-09. Numerous texts bear this out, most notably, Abraham’s covenant with the Canaanite known as Abimelech: Therefore that place was called *Beer-sheba*; because there both of them swore an *oath*. When they had made a *covenant* at Beer-sheba. (*Gen* 21:31-32). Literally, the place where the oath to the covenant was sworn is called “beer-sheba,” the well of the oath. See: *Ezek.* 17:13-19; also: *Deut.* 29:12, 14; *Josh.* 9:15; *Judg.* 2:1; 2 Kgs 11:4; *Ezek.* 16:8, 59; *Hos.* 10:4; *Psa.* 89:3.

¹¹⁰ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 53-54. He adds, “The violation or nonfulfillment of a sworn duty does not terminate a covenant, it simply triggers the curses of the original covenant-ratifying oath. When a party swears an oath to perform some future (or ongoing) duty, the curse abides, like a sword hanging over one’s head. The abiding threat of the curse is absolutely necessary for the covenant to be preserved, lest the covenant be jeopardized by a future violation of the oath.”

- c. As such, the Sabbath is God’s divine call for all of creation to enter His rest. It continues as a “perpetual ordinance” in Judaism.¹¹¹
- d. The *Sabbath* is crucial to Adam’s experience in Eden, and throughout the Abrahamic covenant(s), right through the Old Testament.¹¹²
- e. In the NT, *Sabbath* is redefined and taken up by Jesus.¹¹³ Later, in the book of *Hebrews*,¹¹⁴ the idea recurs—again, in a transformed way.¹¹⁵

II. THE PREDOMINANCE OF ‘7’ IN GENESIS ONE.

1. **SEVEN IN ONE.** As Gordon Wenham observes, “the number seven dominates this opening chapter [of Genesis] in a strange way.”¹¹⁶
 - a. In Gen. 1:1 we read **seven words**. *bəreshîth bārā ’elōhim; ’êṭ -hashshāmayim wə’eth hā’āreṣ*.¹¹⁷
 - b. There is a “doubling” from the first to the second verse, that there are **fourteen words** (2x7) in the in Gen. 1.2.¹¹⁸
2. **SEVEN PARAGRAPHS, SEVEN DAYS.** Following *Genesis* 1:1, which stands apart, the next section of the chapter is divided into seven paragraphs, each of which pertains to one of the seven days.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ See: *Exod.* 20:8; 31:14–15; 35:2; *Lev.* 23:3; *Deut.* 5:12.

¹¹² See: *Exod.* 16:23–29; 20:8, 10; *Lev.* 16:31; 23:3, 11, 15–16; 24:8; *I Chron.* 9:32; *Isa.* 56:2, 6; *Jer.* 17:21–22, 24; *Amos* 8:5; *II Macc.* 5:26.

¹¹³ E.g. *Matt.* 12:1–8; *Mark* 1:21–28; *Luke* 4:16–21; *Luke* 6:1–9; 13:13–16; 14:1–5; *John* 5:9, 10, 16, 18; 7:22–23; 9:14, 16.

¹¹⁴ *Heb.* 4:3–5 “For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, “As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall never enter my rest,’” although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way, “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.” And again in this place he said, “They shall never enter my rest.”

¹¹⁵ Hahn, *Kinship*, 292: “Here the author [of Hebrews] points out the sad state of affairs that, although God’s “rest” had begun on the seventh day of creation, thousands of years later Israel (under Moses) *was still being denied it*. In this way he calls to mind the fact that God’s “rest” had been offered to Adam/mankind at the beginning of creation, and was lost; just as much later it would be offered to (and lost by) Israel. Indeed, theologically the “rest” offered to Israel was essentially the creational Sabbath “rest” offered to Adam. The author makes this clear in *Hebrews* 4:9–10: “There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God; for whoever enters God’s rest also ceases from his labors as God did from his,” that is, on the seventh day of the creation week. So then, the “rest” lost by Adam and Israel, God offered once again through the voice of David (*Psa.* 95:7–8), but offers more perfectly now, through Jesus who has inaugurated the “today” (*Heb.* 1:5; 3:13–15; 4:7) in which “rest” is available. The Old Covenant is associated with unfaithful Adam and Israel-under-Moses, the New with David, who spoke of it and received the promise of it.

¹¹⁶ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15, Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 1* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1987), 6.

¹¹⁷ Gen. 1:1: בְּרֵאשִׁית יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים יָרָא אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

¹¹⁸ This is not evident in English but crystal clear in Biblical Hebrew. [While it appears that there are 12 words, in Hebrew, two words may be joined by a hyphen, as two are here. Hence, 14 words comprise *Gen.* 1:2: וְהָאֵרֶץ חֹשֶׁךְ עַל-פְּנֵי תְהוֹמוֹת הַיָּם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֵף עַל-פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם. [wḥā ’ā’ reṣ ḥōyṯ āh’ ṯ ṱ’ hū wāḥō’ hū, ḥō’ shēḵ ‘ āl p̄nē’ ṯ ‘hōm’ . rīḥ’ elōhīm’ m’rā-ḥē’ -p̄ēṯ ‘ āl p̄nē’ ḥā mā’ -yim. (The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.)]

¹¹⁹ An obvious indicator of this division is seen in the repeating formula, ‘And there was evening and there was morning, such-and-such day.’

- a. There are three nouns in *Gen.* 1:1: *God* [*Elohim*], *heavens* [*shamayim*] and *earth* [*arets*]. These nouns are key in the section that follow, and each of them re-occur in **multiples of seven**:
- The name of *God* occurs **thirty-five times** (7 x 5);
 - The noun *earth* is occurs **twenty-one times** (7 x 3);
 - The noun *heavens* occurs **twenty-one times** (7 x 3);
- b. The terms *light* (*ôr*) and *day* (*yôm*) occur **seven times** in the first paragraph; and there are **seven** references to *light* in the fourth paragraph.
- c. *Water* (*mayim*) occurs **seven times** within paragraphs two and three.
- d. *Creatures* (*ayyā*) occurs **seven times** within the fifth and sixth paragraphs.
- e. The phrase *it was good* (*ki-tôv*) occurs **seven times**; the seventh occurrence is as *it was very good* (*ki-tov meōd*).
- f. In the **seventh paragraph**, which deals with the **seventh day** are the following three sentences, each of which consists of **seven** words and contains in the middle the expression **the seventh day** (in Hebrew):
- And on *the seventh day* God finished His work which He had done
 And He rested on *the seventh day* from all His work which He had done.
 So God blessed *the seventh day* and hallowed it.
- g. The sum of words in the **seventh paragraph** total thirty-five (7 x 5).

III. CONCLUSION: PERFECTING THE TEMPLE: SEVEN IN GENESIS.

1. **NO COINCIDENCE.** Even *more* evidence could be marshalled, yet the significance of the number ‘7’ in *Genesis* Ch. 1 is obvious. As Umberto Cassuto concludes, “To suppose that all this is a mere coincidence *is not possible*.”¹²⁰
2. **PERFECTION, COVENANT, SABBATH.** As shown above, the many occurrences of the number ‘7’ underscores three great themes in *Genesis* 1:
 - a. The utter “*perfection*” of God’s creation: the beauty of creation emerges in a cascade of *seven*’s.
 - b. The *covenant* between God and creation: God *sevens* Himself to His people.
 - c. The “Sabbath” as the sign of this covenant—a perpetual command for humanity to enter God’s rest on the *seventh* day.
3. **WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THIS ALL MAKE?** It is left to ask: what difference do these themes make—as it pertains to temple theology? The answer is clear: *all of this points to the perfecting of God’s temple*:
 - a. One only need recall the weight of evidence presenter earlier, all of which indicate that *Genesis* 1-2 depicts Eden as a cosmological Temple.
 - b. Added to that evidence is our present discussion of ‘7’ in *Genesis* 1.
 - c. Together, the picture is complete: God has created His holy Temple of Eden—and has brought it to perfection.
4. As further support, scholars have noted many parallels between the seven days of creation in *Genesis* 1 ... and Moses’ construction of the tabernacle in *Exodus* 25-39.¹²¹
5. We will now summarize the most important parallels:

¹²⁰ Cassuto, *Commentary on Genesis*, 15.

¹²¹ See Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 143-44; Jeffrey L. Morrow, “Creation and Liturgy: The Liturgical Background of *Genesis* 1-3 (Presented at the Society for Biblical Literature, Nov. 2007).

- a. The concept of “**rest**” links the Temple with creation. Construction of Solomon’s Temple begins only after God gave David “rest” from his enemies on every side.¹²²
 - b. Likewise, Solomon repeats this theme of God’s *rest*.¹²³
 - c. Moreover, *Psalms* 132 describes the Temple as God’s “*resting place*.”¹²⁴

*“For the LORD has chosen Zion;
he has desired it for his habitation:
‘This is my resting place forever;
here I will dwell, for I have desired it.’”*¹²⁵
6. There is notable “sevenfold correspondence” between the creation in *Genesis* 1 and the construction of Solomon’s Temple.¹²⁶
 - a. The dedication of Solomon’s Temple’s occurs during the *Feast of Tabernacles*, a **seven-day festival**¹²⁷ which fell on the **seventh month** of the year;¹²⁸ Solomon’s speech during the Temple’s dedication included seven petitions;¹²⁹
 - b. Thus, the construction of the Solomonic Temple was completed in the **seventh year** after construction begins.¹³⁰
 7. In *Lev. 25:3-7*, the seventh year is designated as a “Sabbath year,” a year of rest.
 8. Not only does this represent another connection between the *seven* days of creation and the construction of the temple, it likens the laborers of the temple to the image of God, resting when their creative work is complete.
 9. Like Solomon’s Temple, the consecration of the earlier tabernacle in the wilderness lasted seven days.¹³¹

¹²² *II Sam. 7:1-6* “Now when the king dwelt in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies round about, the king said to Nathan the prophet, ‘See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.’ And Nathan said to the king, ‘Go, do all that is in your heart; for the LORD is with you.’ But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, ‘*Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling.’”*

¹²³ *I Ki. 5:4-5* “But now the Lord my God *has given me rest* on every side; there is neither adversary nor misfortune. *And so I purpose to build a house for the name of the Lord my God,* as the Lord said to David my father, ‘Your son, whom I will set upon your throne in your place, shall build the house for my name.’”

¹²⁴ Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 143-44.

¹²⁵ *Psa. 132:13-14*.

¹²⁶ See Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 143-44. Summarizing the most important ones here: (1) The construction of the Solomonic Temple in Jerusalem takes seven years to complete (*I Ki. 6:38*). In *Lev. 25:3-7*, the seventh year is called a Sabbath, thus forming a connection between the *seven days of the week* and the *seven years of*, in the case of *Leviticus*, *agricultural-labor*, and in the case of *I Kings*, *temple-labor*; (2) The Temple dedication occurs during the Feast of Tabernacles, which was a *seven-day festival* (*Deut. 16:13*) which fell on the *seventh month* of the year (*I Ki. 8:2*); Solomon’s speech during the Temple’s dedication included seven petitions (*I Ki. 8:31-53*); (3) The concept of “rest” also links the Temple with creation. Rest occurs at the completion of each project (*Psa. 132:13-14* associates the experience of the Temple with rest).

¹²⁷ See: *Deut. 16:13*.

¹²⁸ See: *I Ki. 8:2*.

¹²⁹ See: *I Ki. 8:31-53*.

¹³⁰ See: *I Ki. 6:38*.

¹³¹ Compare *Gen 1:31* (“*And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good*”) with *Exod. 39:43* (“*And Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, so had they done it. And*

- *Gen. 1:31* (“And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good”) *Exod. 39:43* (“And Moses saw all the work and behold, they had done it; as the Lord had commanded, so had they done it. And Moses blessed them.”)
- *Gen. 2:1* (“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them”) *Exod. 39:32* (“Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished; and the people of Israel had done according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses; so had they done”)
- *Gen. 2:3* (“And God blessed ...”) *Exod. 39:43* (“And Moses blessed them ...”)
- *Gen. 2:3* (“And sanctified it ...”) *Exod. 40:9* (“...and to sanctify it and its furnishings”).

IV. SPIRITUAL REFLECTION: ST EPHREM THE SYRIAN.¹³²

1. **ALLEGORICAL INSIGHTS.** On an allegorical level, the fourth-century deacon and liturgical poet of Syria—St. Ephrem—expresses this mystery of Eden as a Temple.
2. **HYMNS ON PARADISE.** In his *Hymns on Paradise* he reflects on *Genesis 3* he speaks of the Tree of Life as the *Holy of Holies* of the Garden, and how Satan deceived the man (and woman) to enter unworthily. In so doing, they experienced deep remorse.
3. **TRESPASSING THE VEIL.** As such, St. Ephrem creates a “negative” parallel, inasmuch as he compares the sin of Adam (and Eve) in terms of the high priest of the Temple who is likewise prevented from trespassing the veil:

“When the accursed one learned
 How the *glory* of that inner *tabernacle*,
 As if in a *sanctuary*,
 was hidden from them
 and that Tree of Knowledge,
 clothed with an injunction,
served as the veil
for the sanctuary,
 he realized that its fruit
 was the key of justice
 that would open the eyes of the bold
 —and cause them great remorse.”¹³³

4. **BEHOLDING THE GLORY.** St. Ephrem speaks of Adam’s shame at beholding *the “glory of the Holy of Holies”*:

“But when Adam boldly ran
 And ate of its fruit

Moses blessed them”); *Gen 2:1* (“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them”) with *Exod. 39:32* (“Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished; and the people of Israel had done according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so had they done”; *Gen 2:3* (“And God blessed ...”) with *Exod. 39:43* (“And Moses blessed them ...”); *Gen 2:3* (“And sanctified it ...”) with *Exod. 40:9* (“...and to sanctify it and its furnishings”).

¹³² Ephrem the Syrian (306-373 A.D.). Syrian saint and writer of poetic commentaries and liturgical hymns regarded by Pope Benedict XVI as the greatest examples of Christian poetry prior to Dante.

¹³³ St. Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymns on Paradise* (New York: St. Vladimir’s Press), 92 [Hymn III, para. 5].

This double knowledge
 Straightaway flew toward him,
 tore away and removed
Both veils from his eyes:
He beheld the Glory of the Holy of Holies
and trembled;
 He beheld, too, his own shame and blushed
 Groaning and lamenting
 Because the twofold knowledge he had gained
 Had proved for him a torment.”¹³⁴

5. **CUT-OFF FROM GLORY.** Near the end of the hymn, St. Ephrem comments on the priest-king Adam, *cut-off* from the glory of God’s presence in the *Holy of Holies*:

“God to not permit
 Adam to enter
 that *innermost Tabernacle*
 this was withheld,
 so that *first he might prove pleasing*
in his service of that outer Tabernacle
like a priest
with fragrant incense
 Adam’s keeping of the commandment
Was to be his censer;
that he might enter before the Hidden One
*into that hidden Tabernacle.”*¹³⁵

6. **ADAM THE HIGH PRIEST.** Finally, in the last stanza, St. Ephrem compares the high-priesthood of Adam with the High Priest of the Old Testament. He does so to draw a theological parallel between the two, in that both are excluded from the *holy of Holies* (the latter enters but once a year):

“The symbol of Paradise
 Was depicted by Moses
 who made the two sanctuaries
the sanctuary and the Holy of Holies;
 into the outer one
 entrance was permitted,
 but into the inner,
only once a year.
 So too with Paradise,
God closed off the inner part,
but He opened up the outer
 wherein Adam might graze.”¹³⁶

¹³⁴ St. Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, 93 [Hymn II, para. 7].

¹³⁵ St. Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, 96 [Hymn III, para. 16].

¹³⁶ St. Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, 96 [Hymn III, para. 17].

THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT (I/IV)

PART I—ALL THE GLORY OF ADAM

“**A**nd the Lord God made *garments of glory* for Adam and for his wife from the skin which the serpent had cast off.”

TARGUM PSEUDO-JONATHAN ON GEN 3:21

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In the previous session, we examined the mystery of the “Temple of Creation” in *Genesis*. Now, building upon that, we move to a new topic—that of the high priesthood in Sacred Scripture.
2. In what follows, it is beyond our purpose to provide a “theology of the priesthood” in the Old and New Testament, nor to trace every development of the theme in Scripture.¹³⁷
3. We will focus on the *sacerdotal* (i.e. salvific) role of the high priest, especially as it relates to the Temple.
4. Beginning with Adam, and moving through Aaron and the Levitical high priesthood, we will move to the New Testament’s presentation of Jesus, our eternal high priest.

II. THE LOST PRIESTHOOD OF SACRED SCRIPTURE

1. **PRIESTHOOD AND SCRIPTURE.** The idea of priest / priesthood is vital to the study of both the Old and New Testament. As one contemporary Catholic biblical theologian writes,
 - “If, for an ancient Jew, it would have been absurd to speak of religious worship without sacrifice, then it would be equally absurd to speak of sacrifice without priesthood. Indeed, the two are almost synonymous: the Temple is the locus of the priesthood because it is the sole place of sacrifice, and it is the sole place of sacrifice because it is the locus of the priesthood. The place of ‘the priests, the ministers of the LORD,’ is ‘between the vestibule and the altar’—that is, in the Temple (*Joel 2:17*). Hence, any attempt to understand Jesus’ relationship to the ancient Jewish Temple must eventually raise the question of his relationship to the ancient Jewish priesthood.”¹³⁸
2. **AN OVERLOOKED REALITY.** Strangely, however, far too many biblical scholars have overlooked / diminished the importance of *priest / priesthood* in both testaments—and particularly *the high priesthood of Jesus*:

¹³⁷ For a good place to start, see “Priest / Priesthood” in *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, S. W. Hahn, ed. (Colorado Springs: Image), 724–29; Albert Cardinal Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest* (Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2009); Albert Cardinal Vanhoye, *A Different Priest*. The Epistle to the Hebrews (Miami: Convivium, 2011).

¹³⁸ Brant Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” ed. Scott W. Hahn, *Letter & Spirit: Temple and Contemplation: God’s Presence in the Cosmos, Church, and Human Heart 4* (2008): 70–71 (emphasis added).

- “Jesus’ priestly character has been ignored, first and foremost, because *the priesthood itself has been ignored in modern biblical studies.*”¹³⁹
3. As Fletcher-Lewis rightly observes,
 - “In the Old Testament the priesthood—its ordination, clothing, sacrificial and other responsibilities— is described with considerable detail.”¹⁴⁰
 4. Yet, as he explains,
 - “Old Testament scholarship has traditionally marginalized these portions of the Old Testament canon. They have been judged a lamentable decline in Israelite religion from the pure faith of the prophets [and author of *Deuteronomy*] into a post-exilic obsession with cultic order and institutional religiosity.”¹⁴¹
 5. Positively, the study of priest / priesthood in Old Testament scholarship is finally getting the attention it deserves.¹⁴² Sadly, it is another matter in the case of the New Testament which has been “slower in coming.”¹⁴³
 - “If there is any single subject which modern historical scholarship on Jesus has almost completely neglected, it is the subject of Jesus and the Jewish priesthood.”¹⁴⁴
 6. Obviously, we wish to move beyond this divide, and show just how vital priest / priesthood were to Jesus (as well as the apostles). We begin with a look at Adam’s priesthood in the Old Testament.

¹³⁹ Crispin Fletcher-Lewis, “Jesus and the High Priest,” 2. The above quote is from an unpublished paper by the author. (Source: <http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/jesus.pdf>). A more accessible essay by Fletcher-Lewis is “Priests and Priesthood,” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, second edition. (ed. J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, and N. Perrin. IVP, 2013), 696–705. Interestingly, Fletcher-Lewis is a non-Catholic (Anglican) scholar, and yet is one of the world’s leading specialists on priest / priesthood today (also angelology). His work is though-provoking and well-worth reading. The title of our present study refers to his dissertation: *All the glory of Adam: liturgical anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill Academic, 2001).

¹⁴⁰ Fletcher-Lewis, “Jesus and the High Priest,” 2.

¹⁴¹ Fletcher-Lewis, “Jesus and the High Priest,” 2. Fletcher-Lewis has in mind historical-critical scholars such as Julius Wellhausen, who systematically dismantled the priesthood from its primary place at the core of all Old Testament study.

¹⁴² See: Fletcher-Lewis, “Jesus and the High Priest,” 2-3.

¹⁴³ Fletcher-Lewis, “Jesus and the High Priest,” 3. Fletcher-Lewis notes some important exceptions: Bruce Chilton, *The Temple of Jesus: His Sacrificial Program within a Cultural History of Sacrifice* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992); N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SPCK, 1996); Paula Fredrickson, *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews* (London: Macmillan, 2000). See also: Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978); Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997 [1961]), 274–329; Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” esp. 70-82.

¹⁴⁴ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 71. He adds: “This is true, despite the fact that it is widely acknowledged that the Dead Sea Scrolls have proven beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jews in the first century were not only waiting for a new Temple, but for a priestly Messiah. Indeed, several major scholars categorically deny even the possibility that Jesus saw himself as a priestly Messiah, much less that he sought to establish an eschatological priesthood. Remarkably, this is even true of studies that are otherwise very interested in the ancient Jewish context of Jesus’ words and deeds. Such works leave one with the distinct (but historically puzzling) impression that while Jesus had a great deal to say about the Jewish Temple, he had almost nothing to say about the Jewish priesthood” (71-72).

III. THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD OF ADAM

1. **TO SERVE AND GUARD.** The first point that needs to be seen is that Adam is presented as *the High Priest of Eden*:
 - **Gen. 2:15** “The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it (*'abad*) and keep it (*shamar*).”
2. **ADAM’S PRIESTLY IDENTITY.** As noted, the appearance of the two Hebrew verbs, “to till” (*'abad*) and “to keep / guard” (*shamar*) are very important in understanding Adam’s priestly identity.
 - “Just as priests and Levites *served* and *guarded* sacred spaces, so the man was charged to *serve* and to guard the garden.”¹⁴⁵
3. **TABERNACLE CLUES.** These are *priestly* terms, “commonly used in a religious sense of serving God,¹⁴⁶ and in *priestly texts*, especially of the *tabernacle duties of the Levites*.”¹⁴⁷
 - **Num. 3:7-8** [ESV] “They shall keep guard (*shamar*) over him and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister (*'abad*) at the tabernacle. They shall guard all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle.”
 - **Num. 8:26** [ESV] “They minister to their brothers in the tent of meeting by keeping guard (*shamar*), but they shall do no service (*'abad*). Thus shall you do to the Levites in assigning their duties.”¹⁴⁸
4. **PRIESTLY SERVICE.** In fact, whenever the two terms appear together in Scripture within an approximate fifteen-word range, they are always in reference to *priestly service*.¹⁴⁹
 - “It is striking that here [in *Genesis 2*] and in the priestly law these two terms are juxtaposed, another pointer to *the interplay of tabernacle and Eden symbolism*.”¹⁵⁰
 - “The Aramaic translation of *Genesis 2:15* [*Targum Neofiti*] underscores this priestly notion of Adam, saying that he was placed in the Garden ‘to toil in the Law and to observe its commandments, language striking similar to the above *Numbers* references ... Verse 19 of the Aramaic translation also notes that in naming the animals Adam used ‘the language of the sanctuary.’”
 - **Epistle of Barnabas 4:11** “Let us become *a complete temple for God*. To the best of our ability, let us *cultivate* the fear of God and strive to *guard* his commandments.”¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵ Daniel Bock, “Eden: A Temple? A Reassessment of the Biblical Evidence,” in: *From Creation to New Creation. Essays in Honor of G.K. Beale*. Daniel M. Gurtner and Benjamin L. Gladd. Eds. (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2013), 11.

¹⁴⁶ See for example *Deut.* 4:19.

¹⁴⁷ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 67 (emphases added).

¹⁴⁸ See also: Num. 18:5-6 [ESV] “And you shall keep guard (*shamar*) over the sanctuary and over the altar, that there may never again be wrath on the people of Israel. And behold, I have taken your brothers the Levites from among the people of Israel. They are a gift to you, given to the Lord, to do the service (*'abad*) of the tent of meeting.”

¹⁴⁹ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 67.

¹⁵⁰ Wenham, *Genesis*, 67.

5. **PROTECTING THE HOLY PERIMETER.** This evidence is compelling and strongly suggests that “the task of Adam in *Gen. 2:15* included more than spaderwork in the dirt of a garden.”¹⁵² Anticipating the appearance of the Serpent in *Genesis 3*, Beale adds:
 - “It is apparent that *priestly obligations in Israel’s later Temple* including the duty of ‘guarding’ unclean things from entering ... and this appears to be relevant for Adam, especially in view of the unclean creature lurking on the perimeter of the Garden and who then enters.”¹⁵³
6. **THE SLEEP OF ADAM.** Related to this notion of “*guarding unclean things from the garden*,” is the following:
 - The “deep sleep” of Adam (*Gen. 2:21*) suggests the passing of one night. Thus, since Adam was created on the sixth day, he awakens to discover the creation of Eve—on the seventh day.
 - “So Adam’s first full day may have been both a day of *Sabbath rest* and *betrothal*, for Eve and himself as marriage covenant partners.”¹⁵⁴
7. **SLEEPING ON THE JOB.** Yet, Adam failed to fulfill his end of the covenant; when the Serpent (Hebrew, *nahash*) entered the Garden, “Adam stepped aside and did not guard the garden sanctuary or his wife from the evil it represented.”¹⁵⁵
 - “This seems to suggest that Adam was to enter into *mortal combat* with a creature more powerful than himself. Adam’s failure to engage this demonic serpent in battle was the result of his *unwillingness to lay down his life in defense of the garden sanctuary and his bride*. Thus, Adam failed to offer his life *as a priestly sacrifice to God*.”¹⁵⁶
8. **ADAM’S FEAR OF DEATH.** The book of *Hebrews* suggests something similar, when it writes of “the fear of death” which overcomes men. Certainly Adam would be at the head at that list:
 - **Heb. 2:14** “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, [Jesus] himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, *that is, the devil*, and deliver all those who *through fear of death* were subject to lifelong bondage.”¹⁵⁷

¹⁵¹ As Beale notes, the *Epistle of Barnabas* links the temple with Adam’s commission in *Gen. 1:28*. See: *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 68.

¹⁵² Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 69 (emphases added).

¹⁵³ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 69 (emphases added).

¹⁵⁴ S. W. Hahn, *A Father Who Keeps His Promises* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1998), 63.

¹⁵⁵ Michael Barber, *Singing in the Reign: The Psalms and the Liturgy of God’s Kingdom* (Steubenville, Emmaus Road, 2001), 44. Barber correctly identifies the dire nature of the threat posed by the “serpent,” sometimes lots on the reader of English translations of *Genesis*. The same term, *nahash*, is used in *Num. 21:6* to identify the “fiery serpents” that attacked Israel in the wilderness, and is used in *Isa. 27:1* with regard to the monstrous “Leviathan” from the deep. Finally, the serpent of *Genesis* re-emerges in *Rev. 12:3-4, 9* as the “great red dragon,” a clear image of Satan, like the serpent of *Gen. 3*.

¹⁵⁶ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 44.

¹⁵⁷ Recall that God explicitly *warned Adam* that if he ate of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and evil that he would “*surely die*” (*Gen. 2:17*). Hahn: “Scott Hahn: Now, if indeed the serpent was a murderous beast [and an *evil angel*], and if Adam did indeed dread death, then suddenly we can understand our forefather’s silence. *He feared his own death*. Moreover, he feared his physical death more than he feared his spiritual death—that is, offending God by sin. The serpent addressed Adam, but he never responded. *Nor did he call out to God for help*.”

9. **MISSING FROM THE CONVERSATION.** In the dialogue between the Serpent and the Woman, *Genesis* portrays Adam as “absent” during the dire meeting. If he is present, he remains *utterly silent*.¹⁵⁸ For example, the apocryphal *Protoevangelion of James* explicitly understands Adam as absent:¹⁵⁹
- **Protoevangelion of James 13:1** “Has not the history of Adam been repeated in me? For just as Adam was in the hour of his singing praise, and the serpent came, *and found Eve alone*, and completely deceived her, so it has happened to me also. And Joseph stood up from the sackcloth, and called Mary, and said to her: O thou who hast been cared for by God, why hast thou done this and forgotten the Lord thy God? Why hast thou brought low thy soul, thou that wast brought up in *the holy of holies*, and that didst receive food from the hand of an angel? And she wept bitterly, saying: I am innocent, and have known no man.”
10. As Gary Anderson explains about the above text,
- “Joseph’s retelling is striking. While Adam was absent, the serpent found his way to eve. No such story can be found explicitly in Scripture, *but it could be implied from the context*. Eve, after all, speaks to the serpent on her own; Adam appears to have no role whatsoever in the conversation ...”¹⁶⁰
11. **EVE UNATTENDED.** In the second-century B.C. apocryphal text, *Life of Adam and Eve*, Adam is busy in another part of the Garden from where Eve was:
- **Life of Adam and Eve 32:2; 33:1-2** “God, however, gave part of paradise to me [Adam], and part to your mother [Eve]: to me he gave the tree of the eastern and northern part and to your mother he gave the southern and western part. The Lord God gave us two angels to watch over us. *The hour came for the angels to ascend to the sight of God for worship. At once, the Devil, our adversary, found the place. Then she ate and gave to me to eat.*”
12. **THE RETURN OF ADAM.** Only in *Gen. 3:6* is he is described as “with her.”¹⁶¹ Only then does he “return,” as the woman gives him the fruit to eat.
13. **PREOCCUPIED ANGELS.** When it came time for prayer, the angels who attended Eve left *Eden to worship God in heaven*. In this moment, Eve was unattended, and the Serpent saw his opportunity to tempt her. According to this text, Eve ate the fruit *on her own* and later gave it to Adam.

In pride and in fear, he kept silent... Knowing the serpent’s power, Adam was unwilling to lay down his own life—for the sake of his love of God, or to save the life of his beloved. That refusal to sacrifice was essential to Adam’s original sin” in: *First Comes Love: Finding Your Family in the Church and the Trinity* (New York: Image, 2006), 69.

¹⁵⁸ See: *Gen. 3:1-5*.

¹⁵⁹ Also known as the *Gospel of James / Infancy Gospel of James*. This text originates in the second century A.D. It was widely read but obviously, never accepted into the New Testament Canon.

¹⁶⁰ Gary Anderson, *The Genesis of Perfection. Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination* (Louisville: Westminster, 2001), 91. It is beyond our scope to engage the following, yet worth noting that the “deception” of Eve has enormous implications for early Christianity. Anderson summarizes this well—particularly the understanding of Mary as the New Eve, as the one who reverses the disobedience of Eve in her “yes” to God (pp. 91-97).

¹⁶¹ *Gen. 3:6* “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and *she also gave some to her husband who was with her*, and he ate.”

14. **EDEN'S DELINQUENT PRIESTLY GUARD.** As such, Adam is depicted as a “delinquent guard”—allowing the unclean Serpent to gain access to the *Holy Place* of the Garden. As its high priest, he has not ministered well in the Temple.
15. **OUTSIDE THE GARDEN.** Other ancient Jewish texts re-interpret *Genesis* similarly. The book of *Jubilees* goes further, speculating that Adam and Eve were *created outside the Garden*:
 - **Jubilees 3:6, 9** “And God brought her to him and he knew her and said to her, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh ... And *after forty days were completed* for Adam in the land where he was created *we brought him into the garden of Eden* so that he might work it and guard it.”
16. **BE HOLY—THEN ENTER.** Another related theme in such apocryphal texts is that Adam needed to consecrate himself before entering the garden temple. As Eden's priest, Adam's entrance into the sacred space of the Garden Temple occurs only after a time of consecration and purifying prayer.
17. **THE POINT OF IT ALL?** It may seem strange to introduce this idea into the text of *Genesis*, yet this hermeneutical move is perfectly consistent with the theology of *Jubilees*, whose priestly author was fervently loyal to the Temple.
18. **PROMOTING PRIESTLY PURITY.** In fact, such an exegetical choice by the author puts the text of *Genesis* at the service of the high priestly cult. With Scripture behind him, the author of *Jubilees* can urge his priestly readers of his day, that just as Adam needed to ‘consecrate himself’ and ‘be holy’, so also must we do the same as he.
19. **ABSTINENCE BEFORE TEMPLE SERVICE.** Another move that the *Life of Adam and Eve* makes is its suggestion that Adam inappropriately consummated his marriage to Eve in the garden temple—when their conjugal union should have occurred “*beyond the holy garden.*”
20. **PROFANING EDEN.** According to the *Life of Adam and Eve*, their willful disobedience defied God and holy temple. They profaned the sacred space of the garden temple, and warranted expulsion.
21. **PRIESTLY ABSTINENCE.** In this way, the apocryphal text “uses” the text of *Genesis* to promote priestly purity in their second / first century B.C. setting, and particularly, laws of sexual abstinence for priests.
 - It must be understood that in ancient Israel, most priests were married. They served in the temple two weeks out of the year, and returned to their homes afterward.
 - Before their time of priestly duties began, they were to “fast” from their conjugal life for a period of about three days. Some followed this oral tradition—yet apparently, others did not. And the leaders of the temple cult were adamant about preserving and enforcing this ceremonial law.
 - With this background in mind, the bizarre exegetical move of the apocryphal text becomes clear: Priests of the Temple: do not do as Adam did! Do not profane the Temple! Practice ritual abstinence before your Temple service—and do not render yourself unclean in the holy Temple.

IV. ADAM, THE BEJWELED HIGH PRIEST OF EDEN.

1. **BACK TO SCRIPTURE.** Beyond the above secondary evidence, all of which underscore Adam's high priestly role, we now return to Sacred Scripture—to examine other primary evidence of a similar nature.

2. **VESTMENTS OF GLORY.** In *Exodus*, Moses is commanded to fashion precious gems for the Temple—and for Aaron’s vestments, both of which reflected the glory (*kāvôd*) of God himself:
 - **Exod. 28:2** “And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory (*kāvôd*) and for beauty.”
 - **Exod. 28:40** “For Aaron’s sons you shall make coats and sashes and caps. You shall make them for *glory* (*kāvôd*) and beauty.”
3. **REVEALING GOD.** “The word for glory (*kāvôd*) is the typical word for *God’s glorious theophanic revelation of himself* to Israel at Sinai, at the tabernacle, and at the end of time.”¹⁶²
4. **ANGELIC ADAM?** *Genesis* does not portray Adam dressed in the glorious robes of the high priest of the later Temple, yet *Ezekiel* does¹⁶³—and stops short of referring to him as an angelic being!
 - **Ezek. 28:13-14** [ESV] “*You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.*”
5. **ALL THE GLORY OF ADAM.** Likewise, a number of texts from the *Dead Sea Scrolls* describe the glory of Adam:
 - “[... Adam] our [fat]her, *you fashioned in the image of [your] glory ... the breath of life you [b]lew into his nostril, and intelligence and knowledge [in the gard]en of Eden, which you had planted. You made [him] govern ... and so that he would walk in a glorious land ... he kept. And you imposed on him not to tu[r]n away... [...] he is flesh, and to dust [...].*”¹⁶⁴
 - “[...Re]member [Adam], please, that all of us are your people ... You are in our midst, in the column of fire and in the cloud [...] [...] your [hol]y [...] walks in front of us, *and your glory is in [our] midst.*”¹⁶⁵
6. **ARAMAIC TARGUMS.** Similarly, the Aramaic Targums replace “garments of skin” in *Gen. 3:21*¹⁶⁶ with “garments of glory”—
 - “And the Lord God made garments of glory for Adam and for his wife from the skin which the serpent had cast off”

¹⁶² Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 41-42. The word for “beauty” (*tiparâ*) is much more rare, and should not be lost on us that most of its occurrences are associated with the beauty of Solomon’s Temple. *II Chron. 3:6* “He adorned [made beautiful, *tipārâ*] the house with settings of precious stones.”

¹⁶³ Technically, Ezekiel is describing the King of Tyre—but it is quite clear from the text that what the prophet says of the King of Tyre is really a comment about Adam himself.

¹⁶⁴ *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 4Q504.

¹⁶⁵ *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 4Q504.

¹⁶⁶ *Gen. 3:21*

7. **PRECIOUS GEMS OF THE GARDEN / TEMPLE.** “Both the tabernacle¹⁶⁷ and Temple¹⁶⁸ were lavishly decorated with *gold*, in keeping with the surpassing glory of its resident.”¹⁶⁹ Likewise, precious stones adorned the tabernacle and Temple.¹⁷⁰
8. **THE GARDEN OF GOLD.** “This corresponds to the depiction of *gold* in the Garden: *Gen. 2:12* “And *the gold of that land is good*; bdellium and onyx stone are there.”
9. **GOD ‘WALKING.’** In *Gen. 3:8*, the verb *hithallék* (to walk), used to describe God’s “*walking to and fro*” in the Garden is the same verb¹⁷¹ used to describe God’s *presence in the tabernacle*.
 - **Lev. 26:12** “And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.”¹⁷²
10. **THE TREE OF LIFE / MENORAH.** In the later Temple, the golden lampstand (*menorah*) was conspicuously placed just outside the *Holy of Holies*. This may correspond to the Tree of Life in the center of the Garden. In the Temple, the *menorah* was depicted as a *small, flowering tree*, with *seven* branches.¹⁷³
11. **WATER FLOWING FROM THE GARDEN / TEMPLE.** Just as water flowed from the Garden of Eden, and watered the earth, so is the Temple described with water flowing from it:
 - **Gen. 2:10ff** “A river flowed out of Eden *to water the garden*, and there it divided and became four rivers ...”
 - **Psa. 36:8-9** [ESV] “They feast on the abundance of your house, and you *give them drink from the river of your delights*. For with you is *the fountain of life*; in your light do we see light.”
 - **Zech. 14:8** “On that day *living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem*, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter.”
12. **ENTERED FROM THE EAST, GUARDED BY CHERUBIM.** The entrance to both the Garden and the later Temple was in the east—and was carefully guarded by cherubim.¹⁷⁴
 - **Gen. 3:24** [ESV] “He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.”¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁷ *Exod. 25:11, 17, 24, 29, 36.*

¹⁶⁸ *I Ki. 6:20-22, 28, 30, 32, 35.*

¹⁶⁹ Bock, “Eden: A Temple,” 13.

¹⁷⁰ E.g. *Exod. 25:7, 11, 17, 31. Num. 11:17; I Chron. 29:2.*

¹⁷¹ Not only are the terms identical, but strikingly, the form of both verbs likewise are identical (*hithpael*).

¹⁷² See also: *Deut. 23:14; II Sam. 7:6-7.*

¹⁷³ *Exod. 25:31-37* “You shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand shall be made of hammered work: its base, its stem, its cups, *its calyxes* [husks], *and its flowers* shall be of one piece with it. And there shall be *six branches* going out of its sides, *three branches* of the lampstand out of one side of it and *three branches* of the lampstand out of the other side of it; three cups made like *almond blossoms*, each with *calyx and flower*, on one branch, and three cups made like *almond blossoms*, each with *calyx and flower*, on the other *branch*—so for the *six branches* going out of the lampstand ... Their *calyxes and their branches* shall be of one piece with it, the whole of it a single piece of hammered work of pure gold.”

¹⁷⁴ See discussion of “Gate Liturgies,” above.

- **Exod. 16:31-33 [ESV]** “And you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. It shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it. And you shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, with hooks of gold, on four bases of silver. And you shall hang the veil from the clasps, and bring the ark of the testimony in there within the veil. And the veil shall separate for you the *Holy Place* from the *Most Holy*.”
- **Ezek. 40:6** “Then he went into the gateway facing east, going up its steps, and measured the threshold of the gate, one reed deep.”
- **Daniélou:** “Prayer facing east is connected with the ideas of Paradise. For does not *Genesis* say that ‘Paradise was planted towards the east’ and so to turn to the East seemed to be an expression of *longing for Paradise*. This is the reason given by St. Basil: ‘It is by reason of an *unwritten tradition that we turn to the East to pray*. But little do we know that we are *seeking the ancient homeland*, the Paradise that God planted in Eden in the East.’¹⁷⁶

V. ADAM, THE TEMPLE BUILDER. One final dimension of our topic is necessary before bringing it to a close. Importantly, Adam’s high priesthood over the garden temple was evidently an “*expansive*” role, in that he was called to *extend the Temple beyond the sacred space of the Garden, so that it would fill the ends of the earth*. The following is a summary of the key evidence:

1. **ADAM’S STEWARDSHIP.** The first occurrence of ’ *ādām* in Scripture is in *Gen.* 1:26–27.¹⁷⁷ There it occurs twice, describing the divine creation of humanity on the sixth day.
2. **AND OURS.** It is clear that the ’ *ādām* created is intended as a collective. In *Gen.* 1:27, ’ *ādām* in the first half of the verse is set in parallel with ‘*male and female*’ in the second half. The intent is to include *all members* of the human race in the ’ *ādām* that God created.¹⁷⁸
3. **SUBDUE THE EARTH—EXTEND THE TEMPLE.** Clearly, *Adam was “not a statue.”* Instead, the man and woman were commanded to be fruitful and to subdue the earth.¹⁷⁹
 - “A royal statue at a distant corner of the empire represented the king’s authority when the ruler could not be physically present. So also, at the completion of

¹⁷⁵ See: *Gen.* 2:8 “And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, *in the east*; and there he put the man whom he had formed.” Likewise Cain lived in the land of Nod, “east of Eden” (*Gen.* 4:16). Beale: “When Adam failed to guard the Temple by sinning and letting in an unclean serpent to defile the sanctuary, Adam lost his priestly role, and the two cherubim took over the responsibility of ‘guarding’ the Garden Temple.” Beale, “The Final Vision of the Apocalypse,” 198.

¹⁷⁶ Jean Daniélou, *The Bible and the Liturgy* (Notre Dame, IN: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1956), 32. Daniélou cites St. Gregory the Great’s *On the Holy Spirit*, 27.

¹⁷⁷ *Gen.* 1:26–27 “Then God said, “Let us make man (Heb. ’ *ādām*) in our image, after our likeness; and let *them* have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man (’ *ādām*) in his own image, in the image of God he created him; *male and female he created them.*”

¹⁷⁸ R. S. Hess, “Adam,” *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 18.

¹⁷⁹ Hess, “Adam,” 18.

God's creation, he left ' *ādām* as his image to represent his authority on earth. This suggests that the function of the image is to reflect the divine will on earth in such a way as to extend God's kingdom into every area of nature, society and culture. This is exactly what happens with the first man in *Genesis 2*."¹⁸⁰

- “*Genesis 1:27* provides the means by which the commission and goal of verse 28 was to be accomplished: humanity will fulfil the commission *by means of being in God's image ...* As Adam and Eve were to begin to rule over and subdue the earth, it is plausible to suggest *that they were to extend the geographical boundaries of the Garden until Eden extended throughout and covered the whole earth.*”¹⁸¹
- 4. “Not only was Adam to serve as a priest-king in the initial stage of the Edenic sanctuary, but *Genesis 1:28* affirms that he was also to subdue the entire earth:”¹⁸²
 - **Gen. 1:28a** “And God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘*Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it ...*’”
- 5. **ADAMIC FIGURES.** Adam's *temple building commission* was extended to later figures with whom God covenanted:
 - **Noah:** “And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “*Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth ...* And you, *be fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly on the earth and multiply in it.*”¹⁸³
 - **Abraham, Isaac and Jacob:** “And I will make my covenant between me and you, *and will multiply you exceedingly ...* I will make you *exceedingly fruitful ...*”¹⁸⁴

VI. ISRAEL, CALLED TO BE GOD'S TEMPLE BUILDER.

1. **A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD.** In a similar way as Adam, and the covenantal figures, Israel was, as a nation, called to be a “royal priesthood”¹⁸⁵ with a temple-building commission from God.
2. **CALLED TO BE A BUILDER IN CREATION.** A crucial part of Israel's priestly vocation was to “build God's temple”—to fill the earth with His glorious presence.
3. **“BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY.”** As Israel flourished, and was faithful to God, the glory of God's name would be spread throughout the earth:
 - **Psa. 8:1** “O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is thy name in all the earth!”

¹⁸⁰ Hess, “Adam,” 18.

¹⁸¹ Gregory Beale, “The Final Vision of the Apocalypse and Its Implications for a Biblical Theology of the Temple,” in *Heaven on Earth*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Simon Gathercole (Carlisle [England: Paternoster Press, 2004], 201.

¹⁸² Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 81.

¹⁸³ *Gen. 9:1*, 7.

¹⁸⁴ *Gen. 17:2*, 6. On Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, see also: *Gen. 12:2* “And I will *make of you a great nation*, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing”; *Gen. 26:4* “I will *multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven*, and will give to your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves ...” Likewise: *Gen. 28:3* “God Almighty bless you *and make you fruitful and multiply you*, that you may become *a company of peoples.*” Additionally: *Gen. 47:27* “Thus Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen; and they gained possessions in it, *and were fruitful and multiplied exceedingly.*”

¹⁸⁵ See: *Exod. 19:6* “and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”¹⁸⁵

- **Psa. 83:18** “Let them know that thou alone, whose name is the LORD, art the Most High over all the earth.”
 - **Ezek. 36:7-11** “For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown; and I will multiply men upon you, the whole house of Israel, all of it; the cities shall be inhabited and the waste places rebuilt; and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited as in your former times, and will do more good to you than ever before. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”
 - **Isa. 42:6-7** “I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.”
 - **Isa. 60:3-4** “And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”
4. **A MISSION UN-FULFILLED.** Yet, in the long story of Israel, God’s people never achieved that calling—not truly—of being “a light to the nations.”
- a. The prophets of Israel understood that the destruction of the temple by the Babylonians was God’s judgment on the unfaithful nation.
 - b. Even then, hope remained, among the prophets, that the “former glory” would return to Israel, and God’s name would be magnified throughout the earth:
- **Hag. 2:2-9** “Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not in your sight as nothing? ⁴Yet now *take courage, O Zerubbabel*, says the LORD; *take courage, O Joshua, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land*, says the LORD; work, for I am with you, says the LORD of hosts, according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit abides among you; fear not. For thus says the LORD of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; *and I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the LORD of hosts.* The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the LORD of hosts. *The latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former*, says the LORD of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the LORD of hosts.”¹⁸⁶
5. **HOPE REMAINS.** Even in the latter time of the Maccabees, hope remained that Israel would (eventually) achieve the “temple building” role which God assigned to her:
- **I Macc. 15:9** “When we gain control of our kingdom, we will bestow great honor upon you and your nation and the temple, *so that your glory will become manifest in all the earth.*”
6. **YET, NONE OF THESE HOPES MATERIALIZED.** Zerubbabel’s temple was never as glorious as Solomon’s. *Israel’s enemies were still Israel’s enemies.* And only in a symbolic way did “all the earth” come to see the glory of the Lord in His temple, i.e., in the *Court of the Gentiles.*
7. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS.** And so, Israel’s vocation—to be the light of the nations—was an unfinished business, and unfulfilled calling.

¹⁸⁶ See: *Jer. 23:3* “Then I will gather *the remnant of my flock* out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, *and they shall be fruitful and multiply.*”

- a. Gradually, though, the prophets of Israel awakened Israel to *faith—that God’s glory would heal them, binding them together, and giving them victory over their enemies ... the redemption of Israel, and salvation among them!*
 - b. All of this would take place in future days, when God’s Christ, His *anointed messiah*, did for them what they could not do for themselves.
8. **N.T. WRIGHT EXPLAINS:**
- “The cross stands ... as the arrow which marks the central point of *‘the faithfulness of God.’* It is the point from which the enthroned Messiah can look to east and west, to north and south, and like Abraham gaze upon all the lands of his inheritance. Their rulers have now been defeated through his death, and they and their people can be summoned to ‘faithful obedience, for the sake of his name’.¹⁸⁷ It is through his ‘giving himself for our sins’ that he has ‘delivered us from the present evil age’: every syllable of that double statement must be given full weight if we are to understand how it is that the Messiah has accomplished the purpose for which the covenant God called Israel in the first place.”¹⁸⁸

VII. THE MESSIANIC TEMPLE BUILDER.

1. **ZECHARIAH’S VISION.** The closing chapter of Zechariah envisions a future day, when the messiah-priest comes to redeem his people, on the Feast of Tabernacles.
2. **KING OVER ALL THE EARTH.** It was a “*day of reckoning*,” when God’s messiah will judge the peoples who have punished Israel. But it is also a day of triumph, *when God becomes king over all of Israel—and all the earth*:
 - **Zech. 14:8-9** “On that day *living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem*, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter. And the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one and his name one.”
3. **THE WORLD’S TRUE PRIEST-KING.** As such, Jesus, *Israel’s true messiah and true priest-king*, was achieving for Israel what God had commissioned Israel to become, *but which she did not achieve—to extend Eden over the whole of the earth*. Not “literally,” but truly—in a glorious, spiritual and sacramental way.
4. **FULFILLING ADAM’S PRIESTLY ROLE.** In so doing, Jesus recapitulated and fulfilled Adam’s original priestly role as God’s temple builder:
 - “And this in turn means that Jesus, completely in line with the hope of Israel, was to be seen as *the genuine human being, the ‘true Adam’, the ultimate image-bearer, doing for Adam what Adam could not do for himself*, reversing the ‘fall’ and reinscribing the notion that image-bearing humans were to be set in authority over God’s creation.¹⁸⁹
 - “When he receives the ‘inheritance’ which is his as Messiah ... this is also both *the ‘inheritance’ which was promised to Abraham* and (since Abraham’s task was to reverse the problem of Adam and so to get the ‘true humanity’ project back on track) *the ‘inheritance’ of Adam himself*. Jesus as Messiah thus inherits all that God

¹⁸⁷ See: *Gen.* 13:14; cf. 28:14; *Psa.* 2:8; *Rom.* 8:17; 1:5.

¹⁸⁸ N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, vol. 4, Christian Origins and the Question of God (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 911 (emphasis added).

¹⁸⁹ Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 908. See: *Rom.* 5:14–21; 8:29; *I Cor.* 1:20–28; *Phil.* 3:20ff.

had promised to Israel in the person of the king, that is, sovereignty over the world. With that, *Jesus stands, for Paul, where Adam stood in Genesis 1:26–28.*¹⁹⁰

VIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS:

1. First, the collective evidence of Scripture itself overwhelmingly suggests that Adam was more than a tiller of soil; he was a priest-king, the high priest of Eden.
 - “... Adam, as God’s vice-regent, and his progeny, were to ‘*put the finishing touches on the world*’ God created in *Genesis* 1 by making it a livable place [for all ... in order that they would achieve the grand aim of glorifying Him.]”¹⁹¹
2. Second, evidence from apocryphal texts, such as *Jubilees* and the *Life of Adam and Eve*, not only support this, but clarify how Adam’s priestly role was understood in Judaism just prior to the first century.
3. Third, “[Adam’s role] was to spread God’s luminescent presence *by extending the boundaries of the original Edenic temple outward into the earth.*”¹⁹²
 - “In the light of the above, one can only conclude that Adam’s kingly and priestly activity in the Garden was to be a beginning fulfillment of the original commission in 1:28 and was not limited to the garden’s original earthly boundaries *but was to be extended over the whole world.*”¹⁹³
4. Fourth, just as Adam was called to be God’s “temple builder,” so were the covenantal figures of Noah, Abraham, etc. Ultimately, as a “holy nation,” Israel was called to extend God’s glorious presence throughout the earth, to build His temple.
5. In reality, however, Israel *never achieved* this divine calling. It would happen later, as the prophets foretold, that God’s own messiah would accomplish Israel’s—and Adam’s call, to extend God’s holy temple over the face of the earth, beginning in Jerusalem.

¹⁹⁰ Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 908.

¹⁹¹ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 82.

¹⁹² Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 82.

¹⁹³ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 83.

THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT (II/IV)

PART II—THE PATRIARCHAL PRIESTHOOD

“When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. Then Abraham put forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, ‘*Abraham, Abraham!*’ And he said, ‘*Here am I.*’ He said, ‘*Do not lay your hand on the lad or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.*”

GENESIS 22:9-12

I. THE PATRIARCHAL PRIESTHOOD

1. **AN UNMEDITATED PRIESTHOOD.** As we saw, contrary to popular misconception, the priesthood of the Israelites did not originate with Aaron and the Levites.
 - a. Rather, it can be traced back to the first Adam, as we saw—and through the patriarchal period.
 - b. One scholar describes the religion of the patriarchs as having an “*unmeditatedness*”—in that they had no prophets or priests to act on their behalf.¹⁹⁴
 - c. The term *mincah* (“offering”) belongs to the later periods of the Tabernacle and Temple—yet it is already found in the narrative of the sacrifice of Abel:
 - **Gen. 4:3-4** “In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering (Hebrew: *mincah*) of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard.”
2. **PRIESTS WITHOUT PRIESTHOOD.**
 - a. The patriarchs were “*without prophet and priest*”—they each enacted the role of each in various ways. As such, the patriarchs did participate in cultic, priestly actions—even if the “priesthood” as we think of it was in the future.
 - b. The priesthood of the patriarchal period “was the *natural family order* ... authority passed from father to son, and sacrifices were not offered at designated sites, but at the discretion of the patriarchs, who practiced a form of natural religion.”¹⁹⁵
3. **NOAH, THE ALTAR-BUILDER.** Likewise, Noah is not a priest—yet he “builds an altar” in worship to God—the first mentioned in Scripture:

¹⁹⁴ R. W. L. Moberly, *The Old Testament of the Old Testament: Patriarchal Narratives and Mosaic Yahwism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1992) 94. “The patriarchs *have neither prophet nor priest to mediate between themselves and God*, nor do they themselves fulfill the role of either prophet or priest with regard to others. There is a quality of *unmediatedness* about the patriarchal religion, which contrasts with the central roles that prophet and priest hold in Mosaic Yahwism.”

¹⁹⁵ “Priest, Priesthood,” in: *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, 725.

- **Gen. 8:20** “Then Noah *built an altar to the LORD*, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.”

II. Abraham, the High Priest of Moriah

1. **PATRIARCHAL SACRIFICE.** Abraham Isaac and Jacob likewise build altars, offer sacrifices, etc. The “sacrifice of Isaac” is especially notable:
 - **Gen. 22:3, 6-8** “So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; and he cut the wood for *the burnt offering*, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him ... And Abraham took *the wood of the burnt offering*, and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. And Isaac said to his father Abraham, ‘*My father!*’ And he said, ‘Here am I, my son.’ He said, ‘Behold, the fire and the wood; *but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?*’ Abraham said, ‘*God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.*’ So they went both of them together.”
 - **Ratzinger:** “He is given something else to offer instead of the son of God—a male lamb. And so representative sacrifice is established by divine command. God gives the lamb, which Abraham then offers back to him. Accordingly, we offer sacrifice, as the Roman Canon says, ‘*de tuis donis ac datis*’ (from your own gracious gifts). Somehow there always has to be a stinging reminder of this story, an expectation of the true Lamb, who comes from God and is for that very reason not a replacement but a true representative, in whom we ourselves are taken to God. The Christian theology of worship—beginning with St. John the Baptist—sees in Christ the Lamb given by God. The *Apocalypse* presents this sacrificed Lamb, who lives as sacrificed, *as the center of the heavenly liturgy, a liturgy that, through Christ’s Sacrifice, is now present in the midst of the world* and makes replacement liturgies superfluous (see *Rev. 5*).”¹⁹⁶
2. **POINTING TO CHRIST.** On this the tradition is clear—the sacrifice of Isaac points forward to Jesus, whom God sacrificed on our behalf.
 - **St. Melito of Sardis** [early 2nd century]: “In place of Isaac the just, a ram appeared for slaughter, in order that Isaac might be liberated from his bonds. The slaughter of the animal *redeemed Isaac from death*. In like manner, the Lord being slain, saved us.”¹⁹⁷
 - **St. Ambrose:** “He brought his beloved son to be sacrificed and him whom he had begotten so late he offered without delay. Nor was he held back by being addressed as father, when his son called him ‘father’ and answered ‘my son.’”¹⁹⁸
 - **St. Thomas Aquinas:** “The patriarchs offered up these oblations, sacrifices and holocausts previously to the Law, out of a certain devotion of their own will, according as it seemed proper to them to offer up in honor of God those things

¹⁹⁶ Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 38 (emphasis added).

¹⁹⁷ St. Melito of Sardis, *Catena on Genesis*.

¹⁹⁸ St. Ambrose, *On His Brother, Satyrus* 2.97.

which they had received from Him, and thus to testify that they worshipped God Who is the beginning and end of all.”¹⁹⁹

- **Catechism:** “As a final stage in the purification of his faith, Abraham, ‘*who had received the promises*’²⁰⁰ is asked to sacrifice the son God had given him. Abraham’s faith does not weaken (‘*God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering*’), for he ‘*considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead.*’²⁰¹ And so the father of believers is conformed to the likeness of the Father who will not spare his own Son but will deliver him up for us all.”²⁰²
- **Navarre:** “The sacrifice of Isaac has features which make it a figure of the redemptive sacrifice of Christ ... There is the father giving up his son; the son who surrenders himself to his father’s will; and the tools of sacrifice such as the wood, the knife and the altar. The account reaches its climax by showing that through Abraham’s obedience and Isaac’s non-resistance, God’s blessing will reach all the nations of the earth (v. 18). So, it is not surprising that Jewish tradition should attribute a certain redemptive value to Isaac’s submissiveness, and that the [Church] Fathers see this episode as prefiguring the passion of Christ, the only Son of the Father.”²⁰³
- **Barker:** “The story of the [binding] of Isaac was important for the Church: the earliest surviving lectionaries show that it was read on *Maundy Thursday* or *Good Friday*.”²⁰⁴

III. THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD OF MELCHIZIDEK. Above and beyond all of the patriarchs, the mysterious figure of “Melchizedek” (Gen. 14) who represents the priesthood of the patriarchal period—and not only so, but a “royal” priesthood.

- **Gen. 14:17-20** “After his return from the defeat of Ched-or-laomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley). *And Mel-chizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High.* And he blessed him and said, *‘Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!’ And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.*”

1. The Kingship of Melchizedek

- *melek* = king, *siddiq* = righteous
- King of ‘Salem’ – A shorter, older name for Jerusalem as in *Psa.* 76:2, “[God’s] abode has been established in Salem, his dwelling place in Zion.”

¹⁹⁹ *Summa Theologica*, I-II, Q103, a1, ad1. Saint Thomas Aquinas, Fathers of the English Dominican Province, *Summa Theologica*, Complete English ed. (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2009).

²⁰⁰ *Heb.* 11:17.

²⁰¹ *Gen.* 22:8; see: *Heb.* 11:19.

²⁰² CCC #2573. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 618. See: *Rom.* 8:32.

²⁰³ *The Pentateuch, The Navarre Bible*. James Gavigan, Brian McCarthy, and Thomas McGovern, eds., (Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press; Scepter Publishers, 1999), 118.

²⁰⁴ Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*, 31.

- This connection between Salem / Jerusalem is deeply important. Melchizedek's ministry in Salem prefigures David's priesthood (see below) and Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem (as well as in the heavenly Jerusalem).
- It is presumed in *Psa.* 76:1-2 "In Judah God is known, his name is great in Israel. His abode has been established *in Salem*, his dwelling place in Zion."
- "The identity of Salem, Melchizedek's city, with Jerusalem, presupposed in the rabbinic sources ... is known also to Josephus."²⁰⁵

2. The Priesthood of Melchizedek

- First person in Scripture called *Kohen* ("priest") in *Gen.* 14:8 – and only figure in the book called priest of "God Most High"
- Melchizedek brings forth "bread and wine" in thanksgiving ... *for Abram's God* – possibly suggesting a "covenantal meal" between them
- "The proximity of Melchizedek's bringing out bread and wine, on the one hand, and the mention of his priesthood on the other suggests a connection between what is brought out and his office as priest."²⁰⁶
- "By means of [Abram's] two acts (paying the tithe and swearing the oath), Abram pledges continued loyalty to *EI-Elyon* and to his priest-king, Melchizedek. The mutuality of covenant solidarity is formally acknowledged by Melchizedek through his *priestly blessing* and the *shared meal of bread and wine*."²⁰⁷
- His "priesthood" is an archetype of the earlier, more natural *father / son* priesthood that existed in the world of the patriarchs.

3. The Identity of Melchizedek

- The "true identity" of Melchizedek is a mystery. Ancient Judaism offered a number of possibilities (angel, heavenly judge, etc.)
- The most striking is that he was *none other than Shem*, the *righteous* son of Noah:
 - *Gen.* 11:10 indicates that Shem lived 800 years – into the age of Abraham.
 - The *righteous line of Shem* leads from Noah to Abraham – and he, like Noah is set apart from all humanity as a *righteous father* and a *blessing to many*.
 - Numerous rabbinic texts make explicit the "Melchizedek / Shem" connection (*Gen. Rabbah* 46:7, *Lev. Rabbah* 25:6, etc.)
 - *Targum Neophyti* calls Melchizedek "the Great Shem." Both St. Jerome²⁰⁸ and St. Thomas²⁰⁹ accept this interpretation.
- "Indeed, many ancient Jewish and Christian interpretive traditions 'naturally' (i.e., on the basis of the logical flow of the *Genesis* narrative) identify Melchizedek with Shem."²¹⁰
- "What may have been more important than the form of this passage is that Yahweh in *Gen.* 9:26 is called the '*God of Shem*,' and in *Gen.* 14:18 Melchizedek

²⁰⁵ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 133. See: Josephus, *Jewish Wars* VI. 10

²⁰⁶ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 131.

²⁰⁷ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 131.

²⁰⁸ See: Jerome, *Questiones*, 14.18.

²⁰⁹ See: Thomas' *Commentary on Hebrews*.

²¹⁰ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 132.

appears as priest of El-Elyon, which deity the rabbis as well as Philo and Josephus identified with the true God. Between *Gen.* 9:26 and 14:18 *there is no other passage in which Yahweh is said to be the God of anyone other than Shem.*"²¹¹

4. The Typology of Melchizedek

- *Psalm* 110 indicates that David was a priest in the “order of Melchizedek” (v. 4). This is astounding, as David was not a Levite – and according to the Torah, only Levites could serve as priests.²¹² Thus – David’s priesthood belongs not to the Levites, but is of the primordial order of Melchizedek.
- “While David’s priestly status is not discussed in *II Sam.* 7, it is clearly demonstrated in 2 Samuel 6. There, David offers sacrifice (v. 13),²¹³ wears an ephod (the garment of a priest, v. 14),²¹⁴ pitches the sacred tent and sacrifices in it (v. 17),²¹⁵ blesses the people (v. 18),²¹⁶ and distributes bread to the people (v. 19).²¹⁷ In this last activity, David is like Melchizedek, who was also *a bread-bringing priest-king in Jerusalem.*”²¹⁸
- Melchizedek’s priesthood in *Salem* prefigures not only David’s priestly identity —but esp. Jesus’ priestly ministry in Jerusalem – *and in the “heavenly Jerusalem”*
- *Hebrews* sees in Melchizedek a type of Jesus’ eternal high priesthood:
 - **6:19-20** “We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, *having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*”
 - **7:26-27** “For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, *holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens.* He has no need, like those high priests, *to offer sacrifices daily*, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself.”

²¹¹ F. L. Horton, *The Melchizedek Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 117 (emphasis added); see: Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 132

²¹² *Exod.* 40:12-15.

²¹³ *II Sam.* 6:13 “And when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, *he sacrificed an ox and a fatling.*”

²¹⁴ *II Sam.* 6:14 “And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and *David was girded with a linen ephod.*”

²¹⁵ *II Sam.* 6:17 “And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place, inside the tent which David had pitched for it; and *David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.*”

²¹⁶ *II Sam.* 6:18 “And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, *he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts ...*”

²¹⁷ *II Sam.* 6:19 “[David] distributed among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, *to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins.*”

²¹⁸ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 54. See also: Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 312-319. See: *Psa.* 110:4.

IV. SPOTLIGHT: THE TEMPLE OF SINAI

1. **THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD.** Sinai is called “*the mountain of God*”—terminology associated with both Eden and Solomon’s temple:²¹⁹
 - a. The covenant with Moses is solemnized on a *mountain*—Sinai, just as the covenants with Adam and Noah were solemnized on a *mountain*—Eden and Ararat, respectively.
 - **Exod. 24:13** “So Moses rose with his servant Joshua, and Moses went up into *the mountain of God*.”
 - b. “Not only does the top part of Sinai approximate the *Holy of Holies* because only Israel’s ‘high priest,’ Moses, could enter there, but it was the place where God’s theophanic cloud and presence ‘dwelt.’”²²⁰
2. **THE HEAVENLY PATTERN OF THE TABERNACLE.**
 - **Exod. 25:9** “According to all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.”
 - **Philo of Alexandria:** “Therefore Moses now determined to build a tabernacle, a most holy sanctuary, the furniture of which he was instructed how to supply by precise commands from God ... *for it was suitable and consistent for the task of preparing and furnishing the temple to be entrusted to the real high priest*, that he might with all due perfection and propriety make all his [actions] in the performance of his sacred duties correspond to the works which he was now to make.”²²¹
 - **Origen:** The “Ark of the Covenant, the mercy seat, the cherubim and *even the Temple itself*” were given to Israel by the angels.”²²²
 - **Ratzinger:** “Moses, he says, made the tent of meeting, in obedience to God’s command, according to the pattern he had seen on the mountain.²²³ This means that *the earthly Temple is only a replica, not the true Temple. It is an image and likeness, which points beyond itself.*”²²⁴
3. **MOSES, THE HIGH PRIEST OF SINAI.** Just as Adam was the high priest of Eden, Moses is the high priest of Sinai.²²⁵
 - **Exod. 19:5-6** “Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a *kingdom of priests* and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”

²¹⁹ On Eden as the “mountain of God,” see: *Ezek.* 28:14, 16; on Solomon’s Temple as the “mountain of God,” see: *Exod.* 3:1; 18:5. See: Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 105.

²²⁰ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 105. See: *Exod.* 24:15-17.

²²¹ Philo of Alexandria, *The Life of Moses*, II.74-75. *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 497. My own translation supplied here slightly modifies the text for clarity.

²²² Origen, *Commentary on the Canticles*, 2. See: Jean Daniélou, *The Angels and Their Mission* (Manchester: New Hampshire, 2009. Originally published as *Les Anges et Leur Mission* by Editions de Chevetogne, Chevetogne, Belgium, 1953),9,

²²³ See: *Acts* 7:44; *Exod.* 25:40.

²²⁴ Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 41.

²²⁵ As discussed in previous chapters.

- **I Pet. 2:9** “But you are a chosen race, *a royal priesthood*, a holy nation, God’s own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”²²⁶
4. **THE ALTAR OF SINAI—THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT**
- a. “Just as with the tabernacle and temple, so Mount Sinai was *divided into three sections of increasing sanctity*: the majority of the Israelites were to remain at the foot of Sinai,²²⁷ *the priests* and *seventy elders* were allowed to come some distance up the mountain,²²⁸ *but only Moses could ascend to the top*²²⁹ *and directly experience the presence of God.*”²³⁰
 - **Ratzinger**: “The essential work of Moses was the construction of the tabernacle and the ordering of worship, which was also the very heart of the order of law and moral instruction. If this is so, then it is clear that the new Prophet, the definitive Prophet, will lead the people out of the age of the tabernacle and its impermanence, out of all the inadequacy of sacrificial animals.”²³¹
 - b. **Exod. 24:6-8** “And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, ‘All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.’ *And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people,*²³² *and said, ‘Behold the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.’*”²³³
 - “Sacrifice and blood-sprinkling constitute the preparatory means for establishing covenant kinship and fellowship between Israel and Yahweh. It is striking and noteworthy that the blood is sprinkled both on the altar—symbolizing the presence of God—and on the people. The sprinkling of blood is a ritualized oath-curse ...”²³⁴
 - “The royal priesthood awarded to Christ corresponds specifically to that which Israel forfeited at Sinai; just as it corresponds to what David was granted by divine covenant oath. From Abraham and Isaac in the patriarchal age to the ‘son

²²⁶ “Those ‘who believe’ (*I Pet. 2:7*) become ‘a chosen race, a royal *priesthood*, a holy nation, God’s own people” (*I Pet. 2:9*). This [] clearly echoes *Exod. 19:5–6* as the author applies the concepts of ‘*royal priesthood*’ [] and ‘*holy nation*’ to the Christian community. The theological message is clear: for those who believe in Christ, the corporate royal priestly primogeniture promised to Israel [at Sinai] is restored. Everyone ‘*born anew*’ through Jesus Christ (see: *I Pet. 1:3*) partakes of this priesthood, *including those who were priests and Levites under the old economy.*” Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 171.

²²⁷ *Exod. 19:12, 23.*

²²⁸ *Exod. 19:22; 24:1.*

²²⁹ *Exod. 24:2.*

²³⁰ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 105.

²³¹ Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 41.

²³² “Sacrifice and blood-sprinkling constitute *the preparatory means for establishing covenant kinship* and fellowship between Israel and Yahweh.” Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 47.

²³³ See also: *Exod. 29:21* “Then you shall take part of the blood that is on the altar, and of the anointing oil, *and sprinkle it upon Aaron and his garments, and upon his sons and his sons’ garments with him; and he and his garments shall be holy, and his sons and his sons’ garments with him.*”

²³⁴ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 47.

of David' in the monarchical period and beyond, the figure of Melchizedek served as a prototype of Christ, *the firstborn son of God and royal priest in the heavenly Jerusalem*, in whom the covenant vocation of Israel and humanity (Adam) is fulfilled."²³⁵

5. **A RECAPITULATION OF EDEN:** The Sinai covenant in its entirety is to be read as a *recapitulation of Eden*:

- **Margaret Barker:** "Although there is [textual] evidence for Moses seeing a heavenly temple, the dominant [Jewish] tradition is that he saw the six days of creation on the six days of Sinai (*Exod.* 24:14-15) and that the tabernacle furnishings represented this ... Moses had a vision [on Sinai] of the creation which became the six days of *Genesis*. Day One was the state of unity underlying and sustaining the whole creation, represented by the angels and the throne of God, and in the tabernacle/temple it was the *Holy of Holies*. The second day was the firmament separating what was above from what was below (*Gen.* 1:6), represented by the veil that separated the *Holy of Holies* from the hall of the tabernacle/temple. On the third day the plants were created, represented by the table offerings of cereal, wine and incense. On the fourth day, the lights of heaven were created, represented by the seven-branched [menorah]. *Thus far the ancient pattern is clear in the Old Testament texts: when Moses assembled the tabernacle, he did so in stages corresponding to the days of creation ... When God created [Adam] on the sixth day, he created the high priest for the temple, the one who had access to the presence of God at the heart of creation.*"²³⁶

V. **THE MYSTERY OF THE FIRSTBORN.** As we saw, the priesthood of the patriarchal period is of a familial order.

1. **FIRSTBORN.** A pattern of *primogeniture* ("firstborn") characterized the priesthood of the pre-Levitical period:

- "A natural royal priesthood of the firstborn son seems implicit in the biblical narrative from Adam through the end of the patriarchal period, that is, throughout the Genesis narrative. In *Exodus*, this royal priestly primogeniture was offered to Israel in both a collective and individual sense: Israel was to be God's firstborn son with a priestly role toward the nations (*Exod.* 4:22; 19:6) and within Israel the firstborn sons (apparently) were to serve as ministerial priests (*Exod.* 19:22, 24:5)."²³⁷
- "In particular, during the patriarchal age *the firstborn son* was accorded certain privileges and prerogatives which later would belong to the Levites. *Genesis* describes how the patriarchs performed certain quasi-priestly functions (e.g., erecting altars, offering sacrifice, paying tithes, imparting blessings), which were ... handed down to the firstborn son as part of his birthright."²³⁸

²³⁵ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 305.

²³⁶ Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*, 11-12.

²³⁷ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 167. See also: N. H. Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991) 107, who comments on the identity of "the priests" in *Exod.* 19:22 ("And also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out upon them").

²³⁸ S. W. Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: a Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God's Saving Promises* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2009), 136. In a footnote, Hahn adds: "To avoid the danger of

- **Ratzinger:** “The lamb appears clearly as the ransom through which Israel is delivered from the death of the firstborn. Now this ransom serves also as a reminder. It is ultimately the firstborn itself to which God lays claim: ‘Consecrate to me all the first-born; whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine.’²³⁹ The sacrificed lamb speaks of the necessary holiness of man and of creation as a whole. It points beyond itself. The Passover sacrifice does not, as it were, stop with itself, but places an obligation on the firstborn and, in them, on the people as a whole, on creation as a whole. This fact should help us appreciate the emphatic way in which St. Luke in his infancy narratives describes Jesus as the “first-born” (see: *Luke 2:7*). It also helps us understand why the Captivity Epistles present Christ as the ‘first-born of creation’, in whom takes place a sanctification of the firstborn that embraces us all.”²⁴⁰
2. **THE DRAMA OF THE FIRSTBORN IN EXODUS.** The mystery unfolds throughout the book of *Exodus* in three stages:
- a. The first stage follows after the revelation of God’s name to Moses at Sinai:
 - **Exod. 4:22-23** “And you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, *Israel is my first-born son*, and I say to you, ‘*Let my son go that he may serve me*’; if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay *your first-born son*.”
 - **Sir. 36:12** “Have mercy, O Lord, upon the people called by thy name, upon Israel, *whom thou hast likened to a firstborn son*.”
 - b. The second stage is at Passover, when *Israel’s firstborn sons* are redeemed—and the *firstborn sons of their enemies* are slain. The redemption and forever-after memorial of this redemption is the Passover Lamb, which is slain—and eaten:
 - **Exod. 12:8** “They shall eat the flesh [of the Lamb] that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it.”
 - c. Thereafter, every firstborn male was “consecrated” to God as signs of this great redemption:
 - **Exod. 13:2, 22:9** “*Consecrate to me all the first-born*; whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine ... “*The first-born of your sons you shall give to me*.”
 - **Luke 2:22** “When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, ‘*Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord*’).”
 - d. The third and final stage transpires as the Israelites approach Sinai, and the giving of the Law:
 - “The firstborn motif is developed at the theophany in *Exodus 19*. God makes a (conditional) offer to Israel as his ‘firstborn son’: ‘Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession (*segullâ*) among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you

anachronism, it should be stated that *the patriarchs are called neither ‘priests’ nor ‘kings’* although such terms are applied to others, usually in older traditions attributed to the Yahwist (see *Gen. 14:18*).

²³⁹ *Exod. 13:2*.

²⁴⁰ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 38.

shall be to me a kingdom of priests (*mamleket kōhanîm*) and a holy nation (*Exod. 19:5–6*).²⁴¹

3. **FIRSTBORN SONS ... WHO ARE A LIGHT TO THE WORLD.**

a. Israel was called by God to act as “righteous firstborn sons” on behalf of all the people of the earth:

- **Isa. 49:6** “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”
- **Isa. 60:3–6** “*And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes round about, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far, and your daughters shall be carried in the arms. Then you shall see and be radiant, your heart shall thrill and rejoice; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.*”

b. This same spirit of being “a light to the nations” is seen in the New Testament:

- **Matt. 5:14–16** “*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*”
- **Acts 13:46–49** “And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, ‘It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, ‘I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth.’ *And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of God; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord spread throughout the region.*”
- **I Pet. 3:13–14, 17–18a**: “Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is right? But even if you do suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed ... For it is better to suffer for doing right, if that should be God’s will, than for doing wrong. *For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit ...*”

c. As Hahn summarizes,

- “As the bearer of divine blessing, Israel stands as *the firstborn son within the family of nations*, for the purpose of mediating the divine blessing of Abraham to all the nations. Israel’s vocation is at the very heart of God’s

²⁴¹ Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 140.

plan and purpose for the covenant at Sinai: *'Israel is thus being called onto the world stage in Exodus 19 to be a light to the Gentiles.'*"²⁴²

VI. CONCLUSION.

1. The notion of priesthood in the pre-Levitical period was of a natural, familial sort.
2. The patriarchs did perform cultic actions—building altars, offering sacrifices, etc. However, it was an age of *"unmediatedness,"* in as much as each father was a priest in his family, and his sons were of his "order."
3. Priesthood in the patriarchal age involved *primogeniture*. The *firstborn son* was accorded certain privileges and prerogatives which later would belong to the Levites.
4. This mysterious figure of Melchizidek was a priest-king, to whom Abraham brings tithes and offering—and who offers bread and wine to *El-Elyon, God Most High*. Melchizidek is the archetypal priest of this earlier order—a recapitulation of the *"righteous son"* of Noah, i.e., Shem.
5. He also prefigures the royal priesthood of David—who though not a Levite himself, is a royal priest, *"after the order of Melchizidek"* (*Psa.* 110:4). Ultimately, Melchizidek prefigures Jesus Christ, our eternal high priest.

With this, we close our discussion, and now turn to the Levitical priesthood of the Old Covenant.

²⁴² Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant*, 141. Here, he cites Dumbrell, "The Prospect of Unconditionally," 147 (emphasis added).

THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT (III/IV)

PART III—THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD

“You shall consecrate [the priest], for he offers the bread of your God; he shall be holy to you; for I the LORD, who sanctify you, am holy.”

LEVITICUS 21:8

I. THE ORIGINS OF THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD.

1. **MOSES, ISRAEL’S MEDIATOR.** With Moses as their mediator, Israel accepts God’s gracious offer of being God’s firstborn sons—at least initially. The Torah is given, and the covenant is ritually sealed with a mutual oath in *Exodus* 24, a very important passage:
 - **Exod. 24:3-8** “Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, ‘*All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do.*’ And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the people of Israel [*likely, the firstborn sons], who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, ‘*All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.*’ And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, ‘*Behold the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.*’”
2. **The Golden Calf.** Yet, the Israelites soon broke their oath, with the great apostasy with the Golden Calf.²⁴³ As Moses prayed upon Mt. Sinai, many broke faith with Yahweh, and fashioning an image of the Egyptian’s Apis god, they worshiped it instead of God alone:
 - “The [Golden Calf incident] brought about a massive reconfiguration in the socio-religious life and structure of Israel. Not only did it cause Israel’s firstborn sons to forfeit their royal priesthood, along with the nation itself, but it also brought in its wake a whole series of catastrophic rebellions. The consequences of the golden calf for Israel are staggering. Not without truth can it be said that *what the tree was for Adam, the golden calf was for Israel.*”²⁴⁴
 - a. In this action, the Israelites—not only the guilty—but the entire nation forfeited the blessing of the firstborn with regard to priesthood.
3. **A CHANGE IN THE PRIESTHOOD.** Moreover, this necessitated a chastisement of the guilty, which the Levites voluntarily carried out under Moses’ leadership:

²⁴³ See: *Exod.* 33-34.

²⁴⁴ S.W. Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: a Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God’s Saving Promises* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2009), 174.

- **Exod. 32:26, 28** “And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. And Moses said, “Today you have ordained yourselves for the service of the LORD, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, that he may bestow a blessing upon you this day. And Moses said, “Today you *have ordained yourselves for the service of the LORD*, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, that he may bestow a blessing upon you this day.”
4. **THE ‘FIRSTBORN’ PRIESTS OF ISRAEL.** Is there a “connection” between the patriarchal priesthood of the patriarchs ... and the later priesthood of Aaron and the Levites? The answer is yes—and the connection is that in both the pre-Aaron and Aaronic priesthood, God calls his priests “sons”—who serve others as the firstborn:
- **Exod. 4:22** “And you shall say to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD, Israel is my *first-born son ...*”
 - “Israel is singled out as God’s people from among *all* the peoples.... Israel is God’s *segulla* ... This word apparently means that Yahweh has set aside for Israel the portion belonging to the first-born son, and thus that Israel is to exercise the privileges *and the responsibilities* of the first-born of all God’s sons—the other nations and peoples of the world. The third statement underlines this thought ... *Israel is to be a kingdom of priest ...* The most probable interpretation is this: *Israel is to be the priest-nation for the nations of the world, exercising the responsibility of priestly instruction and intercession in behalf of all peoples before Yahweh.*”²²
5. **TOTAL TRANSFORMATION.** From this point forward, the priesthood in Israel was *transformed*, given from the firstborn sons ... into the hands of the Levites to safeguard, so that all Israel would have a way to approach God in holiness:
- **Num. 3:41** “And you shall take the Levites for me—I am the LORD—*instead of all the first-born among the people of Israel*, and the cattle of the Levites instead of all the firstlings among the cattle of the people of Israel.”

II. THE THREEFOLD STRUCTURE OF CLERICAL SERVICE. The larger aim of the Levitical priesthood was to proclaim the holiness of God in ritual action—and enforce holiness towards him by all Israel. There was a threefold division in the Levitical priestly system, as follows.

1. **HIGH PRIESTHOOD**

- a. **Beginning with Aaron.** Aaron the brother of Moses, served as Israel’s first the high priest:
- **Lev. 8:6-9** “And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. And he put on him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and girded him with the skilfully woven band of the ephod, binding it to him therewith. And he placed the breastpiece on him, and in the breastpiece he put the Urim and the Thummim. And he set the turban upon his head, and on the turban, in front, he set the golden plate, the holy crown, as the Lord commanded Moses.”

²² W. Harrelson, *Interpreting the Old Testament* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), 92.

b. **Hereditary Office-not Vocation.**

- i. The office of the high priest, of priests and Levites was a hereditary birthright—not a vocation.
- ii. The high priestly office was based upon *qidusshat 'olam* (“lifelong sanctity”).²⁴⁵
- iii. Only descendants of Aaron himself (sons, grandsons, etc.) could receive the priesthood.

c. **High Priestly Vestments.**

- i. The uniqueness of his office “was transmitted to him by the investiture with the eight-parts of his high-priestly vesture.”²⁴⁶
- ii. His vesture “possessed *atoning power*” and each of its eight parts atones for specific sins.
- iii. It was the high priest and he alone who entered into the Holy of Holies once a year, on the Day of Atonement.²⁴⁷
 - **Josephus:** “But for the most sacred place, none went in but the high priests, clothed in their peculiar garments.”²⁴⁸
 - **Jeremias:** “Only thus can it be understood that neither Herod the Great ... nor the Romans later could find a more effective safeguard against rebellion than to keep the high-priestly robes in custody in the temple fortress of Antonia, handing them over to the high priest only on feast days.”²⁴⁹
- iv. There were **four primary vestments** (see Illustration Two, below):
 - The White Linen Robe;
 - The White Linen Trousers;
 - The Turban;
 - The Girdle.
- v. There were also **four “specialty” items**:
 - The Golden Breastplate;
 - The Ephod (i.e. apron with straps);
 - The Seamless Tunic (put on over the head);
 - The Golden Diadem, which fit on the turban.²⁵⁰

[See “Spotlight” below on the High Priesthood.]

2. **THE PRIESTHOOD.** Under the high priest were the sons of Aaron, i.e. priests in his service.

- a. **Free from “defect.”** Besides being descendants of Aaron, Israelite priests were to be free from physical deformities²⁵¹ and were to meet stringent demands

²⁴⁵ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, 148.

²⁴⁶ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, 148.

²⁴⁷ More will be said on the meaning of the Day of Atonement in a later topic.

²⁴⁸ Josephus, *Against Apion*, II.108.

²⁴⁹ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, 148.

²⁵⁰ The full descriptions of the high priest’s vestments can be found in *Exod.* 28-29. See: Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, 148.

²⁵¹ *Lev.* 21:17–23 “Say to Aaron, None of your descendants throughout their generations who has a blemish may approach to offer the bread of his God. For no one who has a blemish shall draw near, a man blind or

regarding marriage and cultic purity.²⁵² The high priest was subject to even more demanding regulations.²⁵³

b. Priestly ‘ordination.’

- i. In general, the priests had to undergo a course of instruction, and were examined before being allowed to officiate.²⁵⁴
- ii. “When a priest’s son reached the canonical age of twenty years, the Sanhedrin, in session at the Temple in the *Chamber of Hewn Stone*, at the south side of the *Court of Priests*, examined him on his bodily fitness, on the legitimacy of his descent before admitting him for ordination. Only after he was found fit was he ordained.”

c. Priestly vestments:

- i. Following his ordination, he immersed himself in a ceremonial bath of purification [and] was invested with priestly robes: (1) the undergarment made of fine linen; (2) pants of made of fine linen; (3) a girdle embroidered in blue, purple, and scarlet, linen breeches; (4) a white turban; and (5) a sash.²⁵⁵
- ii. “These solemn ceremonies lasted *seven* days.”²⁵⁶

d. Priestly Provisions.

- i. The priestly class was not allotted land,²⁵⁷ but given residence in thirteen of the forty-eight cities set aside for Levitical use.

lame, or one who has a mutilated face or a limb too long, or a man who has an injured foot or an injured hand, or a hunchback, or a dwarf, or a man with a defect in his sight or an itching disease or scabs or crushed testicles; no man of the descendants of Aaron the priest who has a blemish shall come near to offer the LORD’s offerings by fire; since he has a blemish, he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God. He may eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy and of the holy things, but he shall not come near the veil or approach the altar, because he has a blemish, that he may not profane my sanctuaries; for I am the LORD who sanctify them.”

²⁵² See: *Lev.* chs. 21-22.

²⁵³ *Lev.* 21:10–15 “The priest who is *chief among his brethren*, upon whose head the anointing oil is poured, and who has been consecrated to wear the garments, shall not let the hair of his head hang loose, nor rend his clothes; he shall not go in to any dead body, nor defile himself, even for his father or for his mother; neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD. And he shall take a wife in her virginity. A widow, or one divorced, or a woman who has been defiled, or a harlot, these he shall not marry; but he shall take to wife a virgin of his own people, that he may not profane his children among his people; for I am the LORD who sanctify him.”

²⁵⁴ Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services as They Were at the Time of Jesus Christ* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 92.

²⁵⁵ See: Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 214-15; Eerdmans *Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 849. See also: *Exod.* 29; *Lev.* 8; *Sir.* 50.

²⁵⁶ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 215.

²⁵⁷ *Num.* 18:20, 23–24 “And the LORD said to Aaron, “You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel ... But the Levites shall do the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; and among the people of Israel they shall have no inheritance. For the tithe of the people of Israel, which they present as an offering to the LORD, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance; therefore I have said of them that they shall have no inheritance among the people of Israel.”

- ii. Their support was not taken directly from the land but was received through a *tenth of the tithes* of the people,²⁵⁸ portions of sacrifices not consumed upon the altar,²⁵⁹ the firstborn of flock and herd, the first fruits of the harvest, the redemption money for Israel’s firstborn sons,²⁶⁰ and—a topic we will return to later—the mysterious *Bread of the Presence*.²⁶¹
- e. **The Number and Training of Levitical Priests.**
 - i. “There was in the Temple in Jerusalem a kind of *archive* in which the **genealogies of the priesthood** were kept.”²⁶²
 - ii. The number of priests, e.g., at the time of Jesus is indeterminate but considerable.²⁶³
 - o “If the high priest was one and the high priests few, the priests were many!”²⁶⁴
 - iii. Each priest was on duty for *only one day* during his division’s week, so each of the 24 divisions would number about 300 priests, which makes a grand total of **7,200**.²⁶⁵
 - iv. Added to the number of 7,200 Levitical priests were approximately 9,600 Levites, i.e. no-priestly / laymen who assisted the priests in their duties.²⁶⁶ **This brought the estimated total of priests and Levites in the time of Jesus of approximately 16,800.**

f. **Priestly duty.**²⁶⁷

²⁵⁸ *Num.* 18:26–28 “Moreover you shall say to the Levites, ‘When you take from the people of Israel the tithe which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present an offering from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. And your offering shall be reckoned to you as though it were the grain of the threshing floor, and as the fullness of the wine press. So shall you also present an offering to the LORD from all your tithes, which you receive from the people of Israel; and from it you shall give the LORD’s offering to Aaron the priest.’”

²⁵⁹ See: *Lev.* 5:13; 6:26; 7:31–34; 10:14–15.

²⁶⁰ See: *Num.* 18:12–19.

²⁶¹ See: *Lev.* 24:5–9.

²⁶² Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, 214.

²⁶³ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, 199–200.

²⁶⁴ Oskar Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 101. According to Josephus there were a few Sadducees, some 4,000 Essenes, and well over 6,000 Pharisees, but 20,000 priests and Levites. Regarding these figures, and for a discussion of their significance, see E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM Press, 1985), pp. 194–98; and the response in N. T. Wright, *The New Testament*, pp. 195–97.

²⁶⁵ Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 199–200. See: Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 99–100. Jeremias: “The number 300 cannot possibly be an invention. We must regard it as the approximate number on each weekly course ... Since there were twenty-four weekly courses, the total number of priests amounts to $24 \times 300 = 7,200$ priests” (p. 200).

²⁶⁶ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, 199–200.

²⁶⁷ For more detail on priestly duties, see: Edersheim, *The Temple*, “The Officiating Priesthood,” ch. 4 (pp. 55–73).

- i. **Edersheim:** “It need scarcely be said, that *everything* connected with the priesthood was intended to be symbolical and typical—the office itself, its functions, even its dress and outward support. The fundamental design of Israel itself was to be unto Jehovah ‘a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’²⁶⁸
- ii. The priests (kohanim) who were responsible for the daily sacrifices in the Temple. They were divided into twenty-four separate divisions. Each division was comprised of Levites from throughout Israel.
- iii. Ordinary priests “lived all over the country and only came to officiate in the temple every twenty-fourth week,” when the turn of their division came.²⁶⁹ “They were obliged to follow some profession in their own district, mostly manual work. Herod had *a thousand priests trained in carpentry and masonry*, and during the renovations to the Temple he employed them in the Temple court and in the building of the Sanctuary.”²⁷⁰
- iv. The duration of each division’s duties lasted **seven days**. (As such, priests served twice a year). During that week, each division was entirely responsible to carry out all of the daily functions in the Temple—far beyond “altar service.”
- v. Priests took turns throughout the year in a manner that can be compared to military reserve duty—one would come to Jerusalem for his obligatory period of service in the Temple.
- vi. **In the Temple, the priests’ primary duty was:**
 - receive the sacrifices and offerings brought by laypeople to the Temple;
 - inspect the animals for blemishes;
 - slaughter, flay, and cut the animal;
 - sprinkle the blood, throw the parts to be burnt up upon the altar;
 - maintain the fire on the altar;
 - clean the area around the altar, etc.²⁷¹
 - “Most of this was done outside the sanctuary, in the forecourt of the priests, where the great altar for burnt sacrifices stood. In the main hall of the temple they probably had less responsibilities, but it was there they burnt incense to accompany the daily, fixed prayers.”²⁷²

²⁶⁸ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 84 (emphasis added). See: *Exod.* 19:5-6.

²⁶⁹ Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 99. See: *I Chron.* 24:1-19.

²⁷⁰ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 206.

²⁷¹ Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 100.

²⁷² Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 100; Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, 201-203. A good example from the New Testament is found in *Luke* 1:5-10, 21-23 “In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. *Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, it fell to him by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.* And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside *at the hour of incense ...* And the people were waiting for

3. LEVITES.

- a. Men of the tribe of Levi—but not descendants of Aaron were excluded from the possibility of priestly service. Yet, these “laymen” played a vital supportive role, as assistants to the high priest and priests.²⁷³
- b. Levites could serve until to age fifty.²⁷⁴
- c. In the wilderness the Levites had charge of the tabernacle and its furnishings.²⁷⁵
- d. They assisted the priests in the tabernacle service²⁷⁶ and were exempted from military duty so that they could carry on with these duties.²⁷⁷
- e. “Singers and musicians formed the upper stratum among the Levites, and only for them were proof of pure descent necessary when they wished to be admitted to office.”²⁷⁸
- f. The duties of the Levites later changed with their reorganization during the monarchy.²⁷⁹
 - They were now to assist in the care of the temple and in the offerings,²⁸⁰ stand with the priests at prayer and offering times,²⁸¹ and take care of the temple treasuries.²⁸²
 - Some Levites were “officers and judges,”²⁸³ gatekeepers²⁸⁴ and served as temple police.²⁸⁵

Zechariah, and they wondered at his delay in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak to them, and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he made signs to them and remained dumb. And when his time of service was ended, *he went to his home.*”

²⁷³ See: *Num.* 1:47-54; 18:16. The beginning of their service is reckoned variously from ages twenty (*I Chron.* 23:24, 27; *II Chron.* 31:17; *Ezra* 3:8); twenty-five (*Num.* 8:24), and thirty (4:3; *I Chron.* 23:3).

²⁷⁴ *Num.* 4:1-3 “The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Take a census of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, by their families and their fathers’ houses, *from thirty years old up to fifty years old*, all who can enter the service, to do the work in the tent of meeting.”

²⁷⁵ *Num.* 3:8, 25-26, 31, 36-37; 4:15, 25-26, 31-32.

²⁷⁶ *Num.* 18:2-4, 6, 23.

²⁷⁷ *Num.* 1:47-54.

²⁷⁸ Jeremiah, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 208.

²⁷⁹ *I Chron.* 23:25-26.

²⁸⁰ *I Chron.* 23:28-32.

²⁸¹ *I Chron.* 23:30-32.

²⁸² *I Chron.* 26:20-28; see: *II Chron.* 8:15.

²⁸³ *I Chron.* 23:4; see: 26:29-32.

²⁸⁴ *I Chron.* 23:5; cf. 16:38, 42; 26:1-19.

²⁸⁵ *I Chron.* 23:5; see: 16:41-42; ch. 25; *II Chron.* 8:14. See: Jeremiah, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 209.

III. SPOTLIGHT: THE SYMBOLISM AND MEANING OF THE HIGH PRIEST

I. THE OFFICE AND DUTIES OF THE HIGH PRIEST

1. As noted above, the high priest was bound to a higher degree of ritual holiness than other priests. He could have no contact with dead bodies, including those of his parents.
2. Nor could he rend his clothing or allow his hair to grow out as signs of mourning.
3. He could not marry a widow, or divorced woman, but only an Israelite virgin.²⁸⁶
4. His appointment was for life—unless he stepped down (illness, etc.)
5. From the time of David to approximately 175 B.C., all high priest were selected from the family of Zadok, i.e., the so-called “Zadokite line.” (More on this in a future chapter.)
6. Any sin committed by the high priest brought guilt upon the entire nation and had to be countered by special sacrifice.²⁸⁷
7. Technically, his only prescribed duties were to preside over the Day of Atonement liturgy, Israel’s great annual feast. It is the only day of fasting prescribed in Mosaic law, and the high priest was central to its celebration (see below).
8. Beyond the annual feast, the high priest likely presided over Sabbath services and other special liturgies (i.e. Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles).
9. Administratively, he served as
10. The office of high priest took on different dimensions after the exile. It gained the qualities of prestige and dignity which had formerly been held only by the king. In 520 B.C. the high priest Joshua and the Davidic governor Zerubbabel were identified as equals (!), the “*two anointed*” of Yahweh.²⁸⁸
11. Yet, over time, his political involvement became more pronounced. By the second century B.C. the high priest presided over a group of chief priests, scribes, and heads of families which formed the early Sanhedrin.
12. During the Hellenistic period the office of high priest became very corrupt -- the target of ambitious and unscrupulous people.²⁸⁹

II. DAY OF ATONEMENT SACRIFICES.²⁹⁰

1. On the tenth day of the seventh month, five days prior to the **Feast of Booths**, the annual Day of Atonement was observed.
2. From the evening of the ninth day until the evening of the tenth was a *fast* on which Israelites were not to work²⁹¹ and, according to Mishnah, were forbidden *to eat, drink, bathe, put on oil or sandals, or engage in sexual relations*.
3. It was not a pilgrimage festival, but it was to be observed throughout Israel, with attention focused on *confession of sin*.

²⁸⁶ *Lev.* 21:10–15.

²⁸⁷ *Lev.* 4:1–12.

²⁸⁸ *Zech.* 4:14; see: *Hag.* 1:1, 12.

²⁸⁹ More on this in a later chapter.

²⁹⁰ The following is adapted from: D. G. Reid, “Sacrifice and Temple Service,” ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background: a Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 1042–1043.

²⁹¹ See: *Lev.* 16:29; 23:26–32; *Num.* 29:7.

4. The central enactment of the observance was carried out in the Temple, and there the focus of attention was on the high priest, who performed the *liturgical rite* for himself and “all Israel.”
5. It served as the annual *day of purification* for the Temple, its altars, furnishings, instruments, its priests and as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of Israel.²⁹²
6. It was the one—and only—day of the year on which the high priest *entered the Holy of Holies* (and he was the only one ever permitted to enter).²⁹³
7. *Seven days* prior to the Day of Atonement, the high priest took up residence in his chamber within the Temple²⁹⁴ in order to carefully maintain ritual purity.
8. During that time he carried out the *tamid* (daily morning and evening offerings) and, under the leadership of the chief priests, reviewed and *memorized* the liturgical rite of the coming Day.
9. The high priest was not allowed to sleep the night before the Day of Atonement lest he jeopardize his *cultic purity* by a nocturnal emission.²⁹⁵
10. At *dawn* the high priest carried out the *tamid* (daily morning offering), and when completed, he bathed, dressed in linen and turned to the centerpiece of the day’s activity:
 - the sacrifice of a young bull for a sin offering for himself and his household;
 - the sacrifice for Israel of two male goats for a sin offering (*one a sacrifice and one a scapegoat*);
 - each of these sacrifices accompanied by specified grain offerings).²⁹⁶
11. Briefly, the high priest first *confessed his sins* over the bull, then cast lots to determine which of the goats would be sacrificed—and which would be the *scapegoat*.²⁹⁷
12. He returned to the *bull*, confessed his sins again, and *slaughtered* it (its blood was captured in a bowl).
13. Then he entered the *Holy of Holies* a second time to place a censer of burning incense on the stone where the *Ark of the Covenant* once rested.
14. The high priest entered the *Holy of Holies a third time*, sprinkling the covering of the Ark *seven times* with the goat’s blood. Then he sprinkled the veil *seven times* with the bull’s blood, and *another seven* with goat’s blood. He mixed together the remaining blood and smeared it on the horns of the Golden Altar of Incense.²⁹⁸
15. He retrieved *the blood of the bull*, re-entered the *Holy of Holies* and *sprinkled blood* in the direction of the stone.²⁹⁹

²⁹² See: *Lev.* 16:30.

²⁹³ “Evidence from Mishnah tractate Yoma reflects the extreme care with which the rite would have been carried out in the first century A.D., for it was fundamental to the maintenance of the status of Israel before God and, in the eyes of many, the fulfillment of Israel’s promised redemption.” Reid, “Sacrifice and Temple Service, 1042.

²⁹⁴ Located along the southern edge of the sanctuary, adjoining the Chamber of Hewn Stone.

²⁹⁵ See: Josephus *Antiquities*, 17.6.4 §165–66)

²⁹⁶ See: *Lev.* 16:3.

²⁹⁷ *Mishah Yoma* 3:9; 4:1.

²⁹⁸ *Exod.* 30:1–10; *Mishna. Yoma* 5:2.

²⁹⁹ *Mishna. Yoma* 5:3.

16. He returned to the *sacrificial goat*, slaughtered it, *captured the goat's blood* and took it into the *Holy of Holies*, where he sprinkled it on the stone and on the veil.
17. *The blood of both bull and goat* was then mixed and used to sanctify the altar, with blood being applied to the four horns of the altar as well as sprinkled against its sides and the remainder being poured out at the base.
18. The high priest then put his hands on *the head of the scapegoat* and *confessed the sins of Israel*.
19. A designated priest led the goat out *"into the wilderness."*
20. The high priest shed his linen garments, bathed, and put on his regular high-priestly garments.³⁰⁰ He then placed the fat from the bull and goat on the burning altar as a sin offering along with their respective *grain offerings*, and the remainder of the animals, including the hide, was taken out of the Temple and burned completely.
21. The high priest then proceeded to the Court of Women, where the people were assembled, and he *read the instructions for the Day of Atonement* from the Torah—and *uttered eight blessings*.³⁰¹
 - **In silence.** "While the incense was offering in the Most Holy Place the people withdrew from proximity to it, *and worshipped in silence*. At last the people saw the high-priest emerging from the sanctuary, and they knew that the service had been accepted."³⁰²
22. It remained for the high priest to take off his clothes, don *white garments*, purify his hands and feet, and return to the *Holy of Holies*, where he retrieved the incense censer.
23. After another ritual immersion and change of clothing—now in his full high-priestly vestments—he proceeded to offer incense on the golden incense altar and *lit the menorah* for the evening.
24. After a final immersion, the high priest went home for a feast with his friends, celebrating the safe accomplishment of his duties.³⁰³ Thus ended *the high point of the liturgical year*.
25. It is this event the author of *Hebrews* has in mind when he speaks of the high priest entering "the inner room of the earthly tabernacle once a year, but Christ entering once into the most holy place of the heavenly tabernacle with his own blood rather than the blood of bulls and goats."³⁰⁴

³⁰⁰ *Lev.* 16:23–24.

³⁰¹ *Sir.* 50:14–21 "Finishing the service at the altars, and arranging the offering to the Most High, the Almighty, he reached out his hand to the cup *and poured a libation of the blood of the grape; he poured it out at the foot of the altar, a pleasing odor to the Most High, the King of all*. Then the sons of Aaron shouted, they sounded the trumpets of hammered work, they *made a great noise to be heard for remembrance* before the Most High. Then all the people together made haste and *fell to the ground upon their faces* to worship their Lord, the Almighty, God Most High. And the singers praised him with their voices in sweet and full-toned melody. And the people besought the Lord Most High in prayer *before him who is merciful*, till the order of worship of the Lord was ended; so they completed his service. Then Simon came down, and lifted up his hands over the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, to pronounce the blessing of the Lord with his lips, and to glory in his name; *and they bowed down in worship a second time, to receive the blessing from the Most High.*"

³⁰² Edersheim, *The Temple*, 315.

³⁰³ *Mishna Yoma* 7:4.

³⁰⁴ *Heb.* 9:6–14.

26. When St. Paul speaks of Christ being set forth as the “*mercy seat*,”³⁰⁵ he has in mind the *hilisterion*, or covering of the Ark of the Covenant, on which the blood was originally to be sprinkled in the *Holy of Holies* on the Day of Atonement. Jesus is the mercy seat of the new Temple, and by the blood of His death he fulfills and transforms the Day of Atonement, far surpassing it in finality and scope.

III. THE GLORY OF THE HIGH PRIEST

1. *Exodus* 28:2–39 extensively details the special garments worn by the high priest. These consisted of a robe or outer garment, an ephod, breastplate, coat or undergarment, turban, and a girdle.
2. The ephod and breastplate were permanently fastened together (v. 28). The robe was a sleeveless blue garment worn under the ephod, reaching perhaps to the feet and decorated along the skirt with embroidered pomegranates (*Num.* 15:38–41) alternated with golden bells. The coat, worn beneath the robe, had sleeves and also reached the feet (*Exod.* 28:39).
3. That the high priest was to image the holiness of God is clear. The penultimate chapter of *Sirach* reflects this belief:
 - **SIRACH 50:1–22** “The leader of his brethren and the pride of his people was *Simon the high priest*, son of Onias, who in his life *repaired the house*, and in his time *fortified the temple* ... He considered how to save his people from ruin, and *fortified the city to withstand a siege*. *How glorious he was* when the people gathered round him as he came out of the inner sanctuary! *Like the morning star among the clouds, like the moon when it is full; like the sun shining upon the Temple of the Most High, and like the rainbow gleaming in glorious clouds; like roses in the days of the first fruits, like lilies by a spring of water, like a green shoot on Lebanon on a summer day; like fire and incense in the censer, like a vessel of hammered gold adorned with all kinds of precious stones; like an olive tree putting forth its fruit, and like a cypress towering in the clouds. When he put on his glorious robe and clothed himself with superb perfection and went up to the holy altar, he made the court of the sanctuary glorious.*

...And they surrounded him like the trunks of palm trees, *all the sons of Aaron in their splendor with the Lord’s offering in their hands, before the whole congregation of Israel* ... he reached out *his hand to the cup and poured a libation of the blood of the grape*; he poured it out at the foot of the altar, a pleasing odor to the Most High, the King of all.

Then *the sons of Aaron shouted, they sounded the trumpets of hammered work*, they made a great noise to be heard for *remembrance* before the Most High. Then all the people together made haste and *fell to the ground upon their faces to worship their Lord*, the Almighty, God Most High ... Then Simon came down, and *lifted up his hands over the whole congregation of the sons of Israel*, to pronounce the blessing of the Lord with his lips, and to *glory in his name*; and they bowed down in worship a second time, to receive the blessing from the Most High.”

IV. HOLY TO THE LORD: THE HIGH PRIEST AND THE NAME OF YAHWEH

1. One final mystery needs to be mentioned. According to *Exodus*, the High Priest did not enter the Holy of Holies by his own name, but by the name of Yahweh.

³⁰⁵ See: *Rom.* 3:25.

2. A golden plate engraved with the words “**HOLY TO THE LORD**” was fastened to the front of the high priest’s turban with blue lace (v. 36). Known as the holy crown (Heb. *nēzer hāqqōdeš*, *Exod. 29:6*), this plate was intended to remove the iniquity of the “*holy things which the sons of Israel consecrate*” (*Exod. 28:38*). Josephus indicates that the holy crown also had a three-tiered diadem worn over the turban and decorated with a floral design, reminiscent of the flora of Eden.³⁰⁶
 - **Exod. 28:36-38** “And you shall make a plate of pure gold, and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, ‘**Holy to the Lord.**’ And you shall fasten it on the turban by a lace of blue; it shall be on the front of the turban. It shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron shall take upon himself any guilt incurred in the holy offering which the people of Israel hallow as their holy gifts; *it shall always be upon his forehead*, that they may be accepted before the Lord.”
3. As such, he bore *the name of God upon his own head*—and all who saw him saw not him but the One whom he served.
4. This mysterious and somewhat obscure element of the high priesthood is all but forgotten in Scripture—until it returns spectacularly in the book of *Revelation*:
 - **Rev. 22:1-4** “Then the angel showed me the river of *the water of life*, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, *the tree of life* with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There shall no more be anything accursed, but *the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it*, and his servants shall worship him; *they shall see his face*, and *his name shall be on their foreheads.*”
5. Profoundly, St. John anticipates that in the age to come, all will finally “*see God face to face*”—and in a grand recapitulation of the high priesthood, His name will be on the forehead of every believer, as a mark of their “belonging to Him,” and as an indication that the “priesthood of all believers” has reached its culmination in the age to come.
6. As sons and daughters of God in Jesus Christ, there is a sense in which the priesthood returns spectacularly to the “*unmediatedness*” of the patriarchs ... not that they are without mediator—for all share in the One Lord. Yet, it is unmediated in that each one who belongs to Him is a living sacrifice, perfected in the resurrected Jesus.

³⁰⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities*, III.7.6.

ILLUSTRATION TWO: THE PRIESTLY GARMENTS

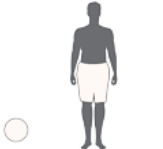







The Priestly Garments

On Mount Sinai, Moses is instructed by God to gather his brother Aaron and Aaron's sons to be priests in the Holy Temple, built in 957 BC. To fulfill their duties, sacred garments are to be made at the highest standards of craftsmanship. In the generations of priests that follow, painstaking attention is paid to ensure every piece is woven and tailor-made to fit each priest.

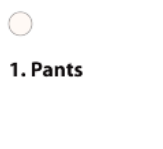
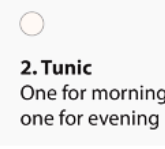

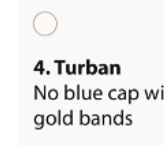
MATERIALS
All pieces are made out of one or more of the following:

- Gold ○ Linen
- ● ● Wool, in three colors

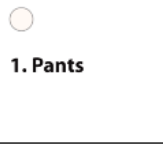
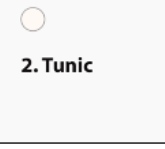
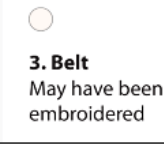
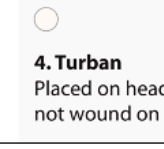
HIGH PRIEST'S ORDER OF DAILY DRESS

 <p>1. Pants The priests can take their street clothes off only after they had put on the pants.</p>	 <p>2. Tunic The sleeves are made separately and are the only pieces sewn, not woven.</p>	 <p>3. Belt This combination of materials is only allowed for the priests' garments.</p>	 <p>4. Robe The hem is adorned with hollow wool "pomegranates" and gold bells.</p>
 <p>5. Ephod Made of all five materials, it is considered the most important garment.</p>	 <p>6. Breastplate It is set with 12 stones whose colors match the flags of the tribes of Israel.</p>	 <p>7. Turban A blue wool cap with gold bands may have been placed over the linen turban.</p>	 <p>8. Crown The thin plate of gold engraved with the raised words "Holy to the Lord."</p>

HIGH PRIEST ON DAY OF ATONEMENT

 <p>1. Pants</p>	 <p>2. Tunic One for morning, one for evening</p>	 <p>3. Belt No wool embroidery</p>	 <p>4. Turban No blue cap with gold bands</p>
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ORDINARY PRIESTS' DAILY DRESS

 <p>1. Pants</p>	 <p>2. Tunic</p>	 <p>3. Belt May have been embroidered</p>	 <p>4. Turban Placed on head, not wound on</p>
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A CLOSER LOOK

Putting on the turban consisted of taking a strip of linen approximately 24 feet long and winding it around the head.

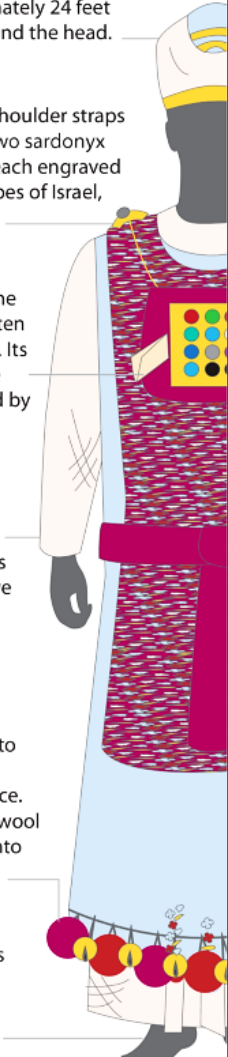
Settings of gold on the shoulder straps of the ephod are fit for two sardonyx "remembrance" stones, each engraved with six names of the tribes of Israel, in order of their birth.

The Urim V'Tummim is the divine name of God written on a piece of parchment. Its presence allowed for the divine guidance received by the illumination of the letters on the stones.

The tunic is woven in a checkered knit pattern as opposed to a cross-weave pattern. The sleeves are woven separately, and then sewn on.

The bells made it easier to follow the priests' movements during service. There are as many as 72 wool pomegranates woven onto the hem of the robe.

The floor of the Temple is holy, and consequently the priests are to keep their feet bare.



THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT (IV/IV)

PART IV—JESUS, OUR ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST

“Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people.”

H E B R E W S 2 : 1 8

I. INTRODUCTION.

1. In previous lessons, we examined the priesthood of the Old Testament.
2. Now, we turn our attention to the New Testament—and particularly, how Jesus Christ is revealed as the eternal High Priest.³⁰⁷

II. FOUR ASPECTS OF THE TEMPLE.

1. In a recent and insightful essay, Brant Pitre describes four aspects of the Temple which are critical to understanding the High Priesthood of Jesus in the New Testament:
 - “(1) The dwelling-place of God on earth; (2) a microcosm of heaven and earth; (3) the sole place of sacrificial worship; (4) the place of the sacrificial priesthood.”³⁰⁸
2. As he summarizes, “*Jesus saw all four of these aspects of the Temple as being fulfilled in himself and his disciples.*”³⁰⁹ Following Pitre, we will examine each one of these aspects of the Temple.

III. THE DWELLING-PLACE OF GOD ON EARTH.

1. “Above all, it was the presence of God that made the Temple a place ‘*set apart*’: in Greek, that is what the word ‘temple’ (*hieron*) means. Although ancient Jews recognized that the transcendent God of the universe could not be ‘contained’ by any earthly dwelling, they nevertheless maintained that *he had chosen in some unique way to dwell with his people in the Temple in Jerusalem.*”³¹⁰

³⁰⁷ As will be seen below, this essay draws heavily from the following article: Brant Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” ed. Scott W. Hahn, *Letter & Spirit: Temple and Contemplation: God’s Presence in the Cosmos, Church, and Human Heart* 4 (2008): 47–83. While the article is excellent and useful for our purpose, it does not deal with every aspect of “priesthood of the New Testament. The student should be reminded here that later lessons will deal with the data of the New Testament: two complete sessions on the Synoptic Gospels, and one session on the *Gospel of John*. As such, this is our “first pass” at Temple themes in the New Testament and more will be discussed in later sessions.

³⁰⁸ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 48.

³⁰⁹ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 48.

³¹⁰ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 50–51 (emphasis added). See, also: N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 406–407; Meyers, “Temple, Jerusalem,” 351–352; Craig R. Koester, *The Dwelling of God: The Tabernacle in the Old Testament, Intertestamental Jewish Literature, and the New Testament*, Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 22 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1989).

2. As Pitre rightly indicates, this theme “runs like a golden thread” in the Old Testament, and only a few Scriptures representing many more need be offered:
 - **Num. 20:6** “Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tent of meeting, and fell on their faces. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them ...”³¹¹
 - **I Ki. 8:10-13** “And when the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. Then Solomon said, ‘The Lord has set the sun in the heavens, but has said that he would dwell in thick darkness. I have built thee an exalted house, a place for thee to dwell in forever.’”³¹²
 - **Ezek. 43:4-5** “As the glory of the Lord entered the temple by the gate facing east, the Spirit lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple.”
3. On the “glory cloud,” Josephus writes,
 - **Josephus:** “This cloud [the glory cloud] so darkened the place, that one priest could not discern another; but it afforded to the minds of all a visible image and glorious appearance of *God’s having descended into this Temple*, and of his having gladly pitched his Tabernacle there.”³¹³
4. **E.P. Sanders:**
 - “*The Temple was holy not only because the holy God was worshipped there, but because he was there....* Jews did not think that God was there and nowhere else, nor that the Temple in any way confined him. Since he was creator and Lord of the universe, he could be approached in prayer at any place. Nevertheless, he was in some special sense present in the Temple.”³¹⁴
5. Drawing conclusions, Pitre asks,
 - “Hence, the divine presence, the presence of God in the Temple, lays the foundation for all of its other aspects ... *How does it illuminate the mystery of Jesus’ relationship to the Temple?*”³¹⁵

³¹¹ See also: *Deut. 5:23-24* “And when you heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes, and your elders; and you said, ‘Behold, the Lord our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; we have this day seen God speak with man and man still live;’” *Num. 14:10* “Then the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel.”

³¹² See also: *I Chron. 7:1-3* “When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord’s house. When all the children of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the Lord upon the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the earth on the pavement, and worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, ‘For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.’”

³¹³ Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. 8, Chap. 4, 106, in *The Works of Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 219. See: Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 51.

³¹⁴ E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63BCE–66 CE* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), 70–71; see: Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 52.

³¹⁵ Brant Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” ed. Scott W. Hahn, *Letter & Spirit: Temple and Contemplation: God’s Presence in the Cosmos, Church, and Human Heart 4* (2008): 52.

6. His question takes us to the very heart of Jesus' *self-understanding* of His messianic mission. Jesus himself said:
 - **Matt. 12:1-6** "At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, 'Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.' He said to them, 'Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate *the bread of the Presence*,³¹⁶ which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are guiltless? *I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.*"
7. As Pitre summarizes,
 - "This is a veiled reference to *himself*. Should there be any doubt about this, he uses similar language elsewhere to refer to himself as prophet and king: 'Something greater than Solomon is here' (*Matt. 12:42*; *Luke 11:31*) and 'Something greater than Jonah is here' (*Matt. 12:41*; *Luke 11:32*). In our text, Jesus is not only identifying himself as a temple—as if this were not striking enough—but as *greater* than the Temple in Jerusalem."³¹⁷
 - "This identification immediately raises a question of no little importance: *if, to an ancient Jew, the Temple is the dwelling place of God on earth, then what could possibly be greater than it?* Although some commentators have tried to avoid the obvious, the only adequate answer is, of course, God himself, present in person, 'tabernacling' in the flesh."³¹⁸
8. Although there is much more evidence that could be marshalled here, we mention only one more passage discussed by Pitre:
 - **John 1:50-51** "Jesus answered him, 'Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, *you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.*"

³¹⁶ The mysterious "bread of the Presence" is a key element of the Temple, and will be dealt with in a later topic. See: *Exod. 25:30*; *35:13*; *39:36*; *Num. 4:7*; *I Sam. 21:6*; *II Chron. 4:19*.

³¹⁷ Pitre, "Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood," 53.

³¹⁸ Pitre, "Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood," 53. Pitre makes a very astute observation about a blind spot in contemporary biblical theology (p. 53, n. 19): "It is fascinating to observe that many modern commentators do not even attempt to wrestle with the implications of Jesus' identification of himself as '*greater than the Temple.*' The verse is all but ignored in the otherwise extremely thorough work of W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 2:314–315. Similarly, the verse receives no discussion at all in Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 111–112. It is also lacking in works on Jesus, such as the (otherwise massive) work of James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 566–569 who totally ignores it in his discussion of *Matt. 12:1–8*; *Mark 2:23–28*; *Luke 6:1–5*, and does not mention it anywhere else in his book. Even Ben Witherington's book, *The Christology of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 66–71, never even mentions this verse in his discussion. It should be noted that this cannot be because there is a strong case for the inauthenticity of the verse, since we have already seen that it strongly coheres with Jesus' words about being '*greater than Solomon*' (*Matt. 12:42*; *Luke 11:31*) and '*greater than Jonah*' (*Matt. 12:41*; *Luke 11:32*)."

9. Pitre's conclusion is accurate: Jesus draws upon not one, but two Old Testament passages in his response to Nathanael: *Dan. 7:13-14*³¹⁹ and *Gen. 28:10-17*.³²⁰
10. The first passage from *Daniel*, telling of the coming "son of man" is integrated with Jacob's dream of a "heavenly temple." Strikingly, Jacob re-names the place *Beth'el* ("house of God").³²¹
11. Interestingly, Jacob has another mystical experience—when he wrestles with the angel (*Gen. 32*). There, he re-names the place *Peni'el* ("the face of God").
12. By way of summary on this first aspect, Pitre writes:
 - "It was a standard belief in ancient Judaism that the Temple was the dwelling place of God ... Jesus, by contrast, transfers this belief to himself, thereby identifying himself as the true Temple of God. He is not only greater than the present Temple, the dwelling-place of God on earth, but at the revelation of the ... Son of Man he will be shown to be the heavenly Temple of God—the dwelling place of 'the LORD' that was revealed to the patriarch Jacob ... it is no wonder that Jesus both reveres the Temple and awaits its destruction. *The old Jerusalem Temple must make way for the unveiled glory of the divine presence that will be manifest in the coming of the heavenly Son of Man.*"³²²

We now turn to the remaining three aspects taken up in the essay.³²³

IV. A MICROCOSM OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

1. We have discussed this theme of the Temple as a microcosm of heaven and earth in a previous session; it will not repeat it here. We will follow Pitre's argument as he moves to the New Testament, particularly:
 - **Matt. 27:45-53** "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, '*Eli,*

³¹⁹ *Dan. 7:13-14* "I saw in the night visions, and behold, *with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man*, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and language should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed."

³²⁰ *Gen. 28:10-17* "Jacob left Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he came to a certain place, and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed that there was *a ladder set up on the earth*, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, *the angels of God were ascending and descending on it!* And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, 'I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your descendants; and your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and by you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth bless themselves. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done that of which I have spoken to you.' Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the LORD is in this place; and I did not know it.' And he was afraid, and said, 'How awesome is this place! *This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.*'"

³²¹ *Gen. 32:30* "So Jacob called the name of the place Peni-el, saying, '*For I have seen God face to face*, and yet my life is preserved.'"

³²² Pitre, "Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood," 56.

³²³ Each of these four aspects are important for grasping the New Testament's revelation of Jesus as the living Temple. Pitre correctly identifies this first aspect, just examined as the most crucial. It is the key that unlocks the other three. Therefore (and for the sake of space) we will be more succinct in discussing the next three. The student is referred to his entire article for full details.

Eli, lama sabach-thani?’ that is, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ And some of the bystanders hearing it said, ‘This man is calling Elijah.’ And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, ‘Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.’ And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. *And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.*”

- **Pitre:** “Every first-century Jew would have known: on the Temple veil was depicted ‘*the panorama of the heavens*.’³²⁴ Hence, with the tearing of the Temple veil and the earthquake—the whole universe, ‘*heaven and earth*,’ were symbolically being torn asunder. And because the Jerusalem Temple was the sign and symbol of this universe, it was now destined to share the same fate. *The old Temple would be replaced by a new*, and the old world—as Isaiah had said so long ago—would be replaced by ‘*a new heavens and a new earth*’.³²⁵ And all this, according to Jesus, would begin ‘*on the third day*.’”³²⁶

V. THE SOLE PLACE OF SACRIFICIAL WORSHIP

1. Pitre now turns in the final two topics to the idea of “sacrificial worship” and “sacrificial priesthood.”
2. One of Jesus’ most memorable actions was His “cleansing” of the temple:
 - **Mark 11:15-16** “And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons; and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. And he taught, and said to them, ‘Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.’”³²⁷
3. Clearly, this was a symbolic action of Jesus—but what does it mean? Often, scholars speak of the “righteous indignation” of Jesus the prophet.³²⁸ But is there more than this? *Most certainly.*
4. As **Jacob Neusner** astutely observes,
 - “[The overturning of the money-changers’ tables] would have provoked astonishment, since it will have called into question the very simple fact that the

³²⁴ Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, Bk. 5, Chap. 5, 214. So Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come*, 33.

³²⁵ *Isa.* 65:17; 66:22.

³²⁶ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 63.

³²⁷ See: *Matt.* 21:12-13; *Luke* 19:45-46; *John* 2:13-21.

³²⁸ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (I–XII): Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, vol. 29, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 121: “If the tradition is correct, then Jesus’ action had precedents in the OT. A prophet like Jeremiah, whom Jesus resembled in many ways (*Matt* 16:14), had warned the priests of his time that the Temple had become a den of thieves (*Jer.* 7:11—the very text that Mark and Matthew record to explain Jesus’ action).” R. E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (I–XII): Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, vol. 29, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 121.

daily whole offering [known as the *tamid*] effected *atonement* and brought about expiation for sin, and God had so instructed Moses in the Torah. Accordingly, only someone who rejected the Torah's explicit teaching concerning the daily whole offering could have overturned the tables—or, as I shall suggest, someone who had in mind setting up a different table, and for a different purpose: for the action carries the entire message, both negative and positive ... The overturning of the moneychangers' tables represents an act of rejection of the most important rite of the Israelite cult, the whole-offering, and, therefore, a statement that there is a means of atonement other than the daily whole offering, which is now null.

*Then what was to take the place of the daily whole-offering? It was to be the rite of the Eucharist: table for table, whole offering for whole offering.*³²⁹

5. As Pitre reflects,

- “This is a fascinating conclusion: for Neusner, Jesus’ actions did not just symbolize the cessation of just any sacrifice, but of the cessation of the *tamid*, the daily whole burnt offering, which was believed to effect atonement (see *Num.* 28:1–8³³⁰). Moreover, when Jesus’ actions in the Temple are combined with his actions in the upper room, they lead a Jewish scholar like Neusner to the conclusion that he intended the sacrifices of the Jerusalem Temple to be replaced by ‘*the rite of the Eucharist.*’³³¹

6. This insight takes us to the heart of the Passion account—the Institution of the Eucharist:

- **Matt. 26:26-28** “Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘*Take, eat; this is my body.*’ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink of it, all of you; for this is *my blood of the covenant*, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’”
- **Ratzinger:** “With the institution of the Eucharist, Jesus transforms his cruel death into “*word,*” into the radical expression of his love, his self-giving to the point of death. So he himself becomes the ‘*Temple.*’³³²

³²⁹ Jacob Neusner, “Money-Changers in the Temple: The Mishnah’s Explanation,” *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989):287–290 (here 289–90, emphasis added), cited in Jostein Ådna, “Jesus’ Symbolic Action in the Temple (Mark 11:15–17): The Replacement of the Sacrificial Cult by His Atoning Death,” in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel* [Community without Temple], eds. Beate Ego, Armin Lange, and Peter Pilhofer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 461–473 (citation 472, n. 6). See: Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 67–68.

³³⁰ *Num.* 28:1-8 “The LORD said to Moses, “Command the people of Israel, and say to them, ‘My offering, my food for my offerings by fire, my pleasing odor, you shall take heed to offer to me in its due season.’ And you shall say to them, This is the offering by fire which you shall offer to the LORD: two male lambs a year old without blemish, day by day, as a continual offering. The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer in the evening; also a tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a cereal offering, mixed with a fourth of a hin [a liquid measure equal to 1/6 of a bath, approximately 1 gallon] of beaten oil. It is a continual burnt offering, which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD. Its drink offering shall be a fourth of a hin for each lamb; in the holy place you shall pour out a drink offering of strong drink to the LORD. The other lamb you shall offer in the evening; like the cereal offering of the morning, and like its drink offering, you shall offer it as an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD.”

³³¹ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 68.

³³² Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two*, 80.

7. Pitre: “As Joachim Jeremias pointed out some fifty years ago, by utilizing the combined imagery of ‘body’ and ‘blood,’ any ancient Jew would have recognized that Jesus ‘is applying to himself *terms from the language of sacrifice.*” This is especially true of the image of ‘blood’ being ‘poured out’; such language is clearly sacrificial imagery drawn directly from *the liturgy of the Temple* (*Lev.* 4:5–7;³³³ *Deut.* 12:26–27³³⁴).³³⁵
8. Bringing the section to a close with a look at *John* 19:31–35,³³⁶ Pitre offers the following:
 - “Then the obvious implication is that it is no longer the Temple in Jerusalem from which the blood of sacrifice will flow. The Temple has now been replaced by the immolated body of Jesus. Not only does Jesus replace the Temple sacrifices with the bread and wine of the Last Supper—which he identifies as his ‘body’ and ‘blood’—but the very body and blood of the crucified Messiah is now revealed as the true Temple of God.”³³⁷

VI. THE PLACE OF THE SACRIFICIAL PRIESTHOOD

1. Finally, we turn to the fourth and final aspect of the Temple—relevant to understanding Jesus as the new and living Temple: “sacrificial priesthood.”
2. Pitre: “If, for an ancient Jew, it would have been absurd to speak of religious worship without sacrifice, *then it would be equally absurd to speak of sacrifice without priesthood.* Indeed, the two are almost synonymous: the Temple is the locus of the priesthood because it is the sole place of sacrifice, and it is the sole place of sacrifice because it is the locus of the priesthood.”³³⁸
3. Here, Pitre’s analysis is very sound—though it should quickly be pointed out that his approach flies in the face of much modern biblical scholarship, which rejects / diminishes the notion of a sacrificial priesthood in the New Testament.³³⁹

³³³ *Lev.* 4:5–7 “And the anointed priest shall take some of the blood of the bull and bring it to the tent of meeting; and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle part of the blood seven times before the LORD in front of the veil of the sanctuary. And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before the LORD which is in the tent of meeting, and the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which is at the door of the tent of meeting.”

³³⁴ *Deut.* 12:26–27 “But the holy things which are due from you, and your votive offerings, you shall take, and you shall go to the place which the LORD will choose, and offer your burnt offerings, the *flesh and the blood*, on the altar of the LORD your God; the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, *but the flesh you may eat.*”

³³⁵ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 68, citing Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM, 1966), 222.

³³⁶ *John* 19:31–34 “Since it was the day of Preparation, in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, *and at once there came out blood and water.*”

³³⁷ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 70 (emphasis added).

³³⁸ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 70–71 (emphasis added). He adds: “The place of ‘the priests, the ministers of the Lord,’ is ‘between the vestibule and the altar’—that is, in the *Temple* (*Joel* 2:17). Hence, any attempt to understand Jesus’ relationship to the ancient Jewish Temple must eventually raise the question of his relationship to the ancient Jewish priesthood.”

³³⁹ For important exceptions, see: Crispin Fletcher-Louis, “Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 1,” *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 4:2 (2006): 155–175; “Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 2,”

4. Jesus is called the “*Holy One of God*” *Mark* 1:24; *Luke* 4:34; *John* 6:69 – a title used “exclusively of Aaron in the Bible (*Psa.* 106:16; *Num.* 16:7; *Sir.* 45:6).”³⁴⁰
5. In support of his argument, Pitre turns to a number of biblical passages in which Jesus speaks of the eschatological Temple, comparing them with Old Testament counterparts: “it is no coincidence that *in the very texts wherein Jesus speaks about the eschatological Temple, he also speaks of the eschatological priesthood.*”³⁴¹
6. One of first pair of texts he looks at is the “cleansing of the Temple” (above) and compares it with a text from the prophet Isaiah:
 - **Isa. 56:6–8** “And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants ... these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”³⁴²
7. This is a remarkable text: the prophet Isaiah foresees a new “house of prayer,” a *eschatological Temple*, and along with it, a “new priesthood,” and *eschatological priesthood*. The “foreigners” (Gentiles) are clearly depicted as making righteous “burnt offerings” to the Lord in a future age.
 - Pitre: “It is hard to overestimate how striking these prophecies would have been ... For at the time Jesus, every practicing Jew would have known that it was not only totally prohibited for a Gentile to act as priest, but *even the majority of Israelites—all twelve tribes*, with the exception of the tribe of Levi—were prohibited from acting a priests. Since the time of the golden calf incident, the priesthood had been taken away from the twelve tribes as a whole and given to only one: the tribe of Levi.”³⁴³

Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus 5:1 (2007): 57–79; also: Albert Vanhoye, S.J., *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest*, trans. J. Bernard Orchard, (Petersham, MA: St. Bede’s, 1986), 47–59; André Feuillet, *The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (New York: Doubleday, 1975); Oscar Cullman, *The Christology of the New Testament*, trans. Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall (London: SCM, 1959), 83–89.” Pitre adds: “It is notable that none of these appear in major historical monographs on Jesus.”

³⁴⁰ Fletcher-Louis, “Priests and Priesthood” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd edition. Joel B. Green, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2013), 696-704—here, p. 702.

³⁴¹ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 72.

³⁴² Another passage which speaks of an “eschatological priesthood” including Gentiles is *Isa.* 66:21 “And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says the LORD.”

³⁴³ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 73. (See *Exod.* Ch. 32). For corroborating evidence, see the ancient *Testament of Levi* 18:1–14: “When vengeance will have come upon them from the Lord, *the priesthood will lapse. And then the Lord will raise up a new priest, to whom all the words of the Lord will be revealed.*” ... And the angels of glory of the Lord’s presence will be made glad by him. *The heavens will be opened and from the Temple of glory sanctification will come upon him, with a fatherly voice, as from Abraham to Isaac.* And the glory of the Most High shall burst forth upon him. And the spirit of understanding and sanctification shall rest upon him in the water. For he shall give the majesty of the Lord to those who are his sons in truth forever. *And there shall be no successor for him from generation to generation forever. And in his priesthood the Gentiles shall be multiplied in knowledge upon the earth, and they shall be illumined by the grace of the Lord. In his priesthood sin shall cease and lawless men shall rest from their evil deeds, and righteous men shall find rest in him. And he shall open the gates of Paradise; he shall remove the sword that has threatened since Adam, and he will grant to the saints to eat of the Tree of Life.* The spirit of holiness shall be upon them. And

8. A second set of texts examined is *Matt. 12:1-8*³⁴⁴ and *Lev. 24:5-9*.³⁴⁵ The Gospel text is one of the so-called “Sabbath sayings” of Jesus (*For the Son of man is lord of the Sabbath*). The text from *Leviticus* concerns the mysterious Bread of the Presence.

VII. SPOTLIGHT: THE BREAD OF THE FACE

1. EATING PRIESTLY BREAD ON THE SABBATH. The Bread of the Presence (or “face”)³⁴⁶ is significant to understanding Jesus’ statement, and how Jesus’ disciples “plucked grain” on the Sabbath. As *Leviticus* indicates:
 - In the Old Testament, *lehem panim* was a sign in the Temple of God’s eternal covenant with Israel (hence the “*twelve cakes*”);
 - *Lehem panim* was offered to God as an offering weekly, on the day of rest and worship, i.e. the *Sabbath*;
 - The priests (i.e. Aaron and his sons)—and they alone—*ate the lehem panim* in the Tabernacle;
 - This was the exclusive offering of the Sabbath—and as it was consumed by the priests, they drank offerings of wine.³⁴⁷
2. **DAVID’S PRIESTLY MEAL.** To be clear, it is the above “unbloody” sacrifice that Jesus refers to in His Sabbath saying. Strikingly, the one who “eats the Bread of the Presence” to which Jesus refers in *Matthew 12* is not Aaron, nor *any* Levitical

Beliar shall be bound by him. And he shall grant his children the authority to trample on wicked spirits.” (Source: Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:794–795.)

³⁴⁴ *Matt. 12:1-8* “At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, ‘Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.’ He said to them, ‘Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: *how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence*, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are *guiltless*? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. *For the Son of man is lord of the Sabbath.*”

³⁴⁵ *Lev. 24:5-9* “And you shall take fine flour, and *bake twelve cakes* of it; two tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake. And you shall set them in two rows, six in a row, upon the table of pure gold. And you shall put pure frankincense with each row, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion to be offered by fire to the LORD. Every Sabbath day Aaron shall set it in order before the LORD continually on behalf of the people of Israel as a covenant forever. And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the offerings by fire to the LORD, a perpetual due.”

³⁴⁶ One of the reasons that this mysterious substance is overlooked by many—aside from the fact that many references to it are tucked away in *Leviticus*—is that it has been mistranslated. A number of English bible translations retain the phrase “Showbread” from the Protestant term *schaubrot* (German, “shewbread”), which mistranslates the original Hebrew phrase, *lehem panim*. Literally, *lehem panim* is translated as “bread of the face.”

³⁴⁷ See: *Exod. 25:29* “And you shall make its plates and dishes for incense, *and its flagons and bowls with which to pour libations; of pure gold you shall make them.* And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before me always.”

- priest—but *David*. This should get our attention, for David is not a priest, and not even a Levite!³⁴⁸
- a. Yet, just as David and his men were “*guiltless*” priests (*Matt.* 12:5), Jesus argues that His disciples were indeed “*guiltless*” (*Matt.* 12:7). How could this be?
 - “The way Jesus tells the Old Testament story, *David* plays the role of the priest who enters the sanctuary on the Sabbath to collect the old bread and distribute it to his fellow priests.”³⁴⁹
 - b. We need only recall, in our earlier discussion of the priesthood of Melchizedek, that *Psalms* 110 boldly declares that David was *indeed* a legitimate priest—of an entirely different nature, “after the order of Melchizedek.”³⁵⁰
 - “Jesus justifies his disciples’ breach of the Sabbath because he claims to be a sacral king and high priestly Son of Man. Where *he* is, in that place there is the transcendent liturgical space and time of the true Temple in which his disciples can legitimately act as priests for whom the Sabbath prohibition does not apply.”³⁵¹
3. **PREFIGURING THE EUCHARIST.** The only real question that remains is why Jesus makes such a strange connection, in defending His disciples plucking grain on the Sabbath.
- a. Pitre elsewhere suggests that the Bread of the Presence is “an extremely important piece of the Eucharistic puzzle.”³⁵²
 - b. In *Exodus*, the Bread of the Presence, along with the Ark and Golden Lampstand, were all “patterned on the heavenly realities.”³⁵³
 - c. Next to the mysterious Bread are “flagons and bowls” for sacrificial offerings of wine, apparently drunk “in a sacred meal of bread and wine.”³⁵⁴
 - d. The most literal translation of *lehem panim*, according to the Hebrew of *Exodus* is *bread of the presence / face*. “The implications are enormous: the bread of the Presence is nothing less than the Bread of the Face of God. In this view, the bread itself is a visible sign of the face of God.”³⁵⁵

³⁴⁸ David was of the tribe of Judah. As such, he was disqualified from the Levitical priesthood, which was reserved by God for the Levites alone. (See: *I Sam.* 17:12 “Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse, who had eight sons.”)

³⁴⁹ Crispin Fletcher-Louis, “Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 2,” in: *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* (2007), 76. Regarding the priesthood of David, see Carl E. Armerding, “Were David’s Sons Priests?” in *Current Issues in Biblical and Patristic Interpretation: Studies in Honor of Merrill C. Tenney Presented by his Former Students*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975); Anthony Phillips, “David’s Linen Ephod,” *Vetus Testamentum* 19 (1969): 458–487. Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 77.

³⁵⁰ *Psa.* 110:4 “The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.’”

³⁵¹ Fletcher-Louis, “Jesus as the High-Priestly Messiah: Part 2,” 77. See: Pitre, 77.

³⁵² Brant Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*. Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper (New York: Doubleday, 2011), 117. See ch. 5 (117–46) on the Bread of the Presence.

³⁵³ Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 120. See: *Exod.* 25:23–34, 29–30.

³⁵⁴ Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 120.

³⁵⁵ Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 121.

- e. Recall that in *Exodus* 24, Moses, along with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu (the “three”) “saw God” at Sinai:
- **Exod. 24:9-11** “Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and *they saw the God of Israel*; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; *they beheld God, and ate and drank.*”
- f. Later, in *Leviticus*, the Levitical priests are commanded to continually bake *twelve cakes* of this bread as a sign of His covenant with them—in a manner of speaking, it was a perpetual “sacrament” of the everlasting covenant between God and His people.³⁵⁶
- g. Moreover, texts in *Ezekiel* suggest that this covenantal bread was an “altar” and therefore a “sacrifice” and not merely a meal.³⁵⁷
- Just prior to the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., “every week, Sabbath worship revolved around offering the fresh Bread of the Presence *and of the eating of the bread by the priests of the Holy Place.*”³⁵⁸
- h. Strikingly, Pitre has found connections between the Bread of the Presence and the priesthood of Melchizidek—which identifies the “bread and wine” of *Genesis* 14 with the sacrificial Bread of the Presence.³⁵⁹
- i. Finally, some important ancient rabbinic texts testify to the fact that at the three great temple feasts—Passover, Tabernacles, and Pentecost (“Weeks”)—the Levitical priests would *remove the Bread of the Presence from the restricted space of the Holy Place, so that all of the pilgrims could “see” the Bread of the Face of God:*
- “They [the priests] used to life it [the Golden Table] up and exhibit *the Bread of the Presence* on it to those who came up for the festivals, saying to them, ‘Behold, God’s Love for you!’”³⁶⁰
4. **THE BREAD OF THE FACE—AND THE NEW PRIESTHOOD:** “One cannot help but wonder if the reason is because at the Last Supper he will institute a ritual in which *the twelve disciples*—most of whom were apparently not Levitical priests—will be commanded to *repeat the very priestly act of offering sacrificial bread and wine of a new “covenant”*.³⁶¹ In the old Temple of the old covenant, this would constitute a grave sacrilege, as well as a violation of the Law. But ... *in the new Temple—the Temple of Jesus’ ‘body’*—it appears that a new ‘Bread (and Wine) of the Presence’ will constitute *the center of the eschatological priesthood of the restored twelve tribes of Israel.*”³⁶²

³⁵⁶ See: *Lev.* 24:5-7; Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 123.

³⁵⁷ See: *Ezek.* 41:21-22; See: Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 123.

³⁵⁸ Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 125.

³⁵⁹ See: Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 127; *Genesis Rabbah* 43:6.

³⁶⁰ Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 131; see: Babylonian Talmud, *Menahothi* 29A.

³⁶¹ See: *Matt.* 26:28; *Mark* 14:24; *Luke* 22:20; *I Cor.* 11:23.

³⁶² Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 77–78. He clarifies: “Although there is some speculation that John ... was of a priestly family, and good reasons to believe that Matthew (*Matt.* 9:9; 10:3) was of Levitical heritage (also called ‘Levi’ in *Mark* 2:15; *Luke* 5:27) there is no evidence to my knowledge

VIII. CONCLUSION.

1. Although considerably more evidence is presented in the essay,³⁶³ Pitre summarizes his argument on the new priesthood as follows:
 - a. Firstly—“Jesus believed that the sacrificial worship of the old covenant *was coming to its end*. The time of animal sacrifice was now being brought to a close, to be replaced not only by the sacrificial death of Jesus, but by the memorial of that sacrifice which he instituted in the upper room.”³⁶⁴
 - b. Secondly—Jesus intended to establish a new Temple cult—*one focused on his body, focused on the Eucharist*.³⁶⁵
 - c. Thirdly—“For Jesus—like many other Jews of his day—the coming of the new Temple would not simply be an event of national (international) significance. Rather, *it would impact the cosmos itself*.”³⁶⁶
 - d. “Fourth—“Jesus’ identification of himself with the Temple provides us with a penetrating insight into the mystery of his self-understanding ...If Jesus did indeed refer to himself as ‘*something greater*’ than the earthly Temple and identified himself as the heavenly Temple of the ‘Son of Man,’ *then he was claiming nothing less than to be God dwelling with us*.”³⁶⁷
2. Added to this is our discussion of the ‘Bread of the Face’—which unfolds in the fullness of Scripture as not only a liturgical meal of ancient Israel, but a “sacrament”

that any of the other Twelve were of priestly descent. The theory about the priestly identity of John was recently given a very visible supporter in Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), *Jesus of Nazareth*, trans. Adrian J. Walker (New York: Doubleday, 2007), 224–225, following Henri Cazelles, “Johannes. Ein Sohn des Zebedaüs. ‘Priester’ und Apostel” [John. A Son of Zebedee. ‘Priest’ and ‘Apostle’] *Internationale Katholische Zeitschrift Communio* 31 (2002): 479–484.

³⁶³ See for example, Pitre’s discussion of the priestly divisions at Mount Sinai in the Old Covenant, and Jesus and His disciples (pp. 80–81). E.g. The One High Priest (Aaron // Jesus); the “three” (Aaron, Nadab, Abihu // Peter, James and John); the “twelve” (“twelve pillars / young men” of the “twelve tribes // the Twelve apostles); the “seventy” (priestly elders of Israel // the “seventy” who are appointed and sent by Jesus, to proclaim the Kingdom of God. [Traditionally, in the ancient world, the number “seventy” symbolized the table of nations.]

³⁶⁴ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 82 (emphasis added).

³⁶⁵ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 83 (emphasis added). As to the lack of receptivity of this point by many modern scholars, he adds: “Although the study of this issue is still in its infancy, when the evidence from the Gospels is situated in the context of ancient Jewish liturgy and ancient Jewish eschatology, *the conclusion seems unavoidable, and its implications weighty*. In the twentieth century, it was very popular to see Jesus as the ‘apocalyptic prophet’ who thought (wrongly) that history would come to its end in his lifetime. But if Jesus not only deliberately organized his disciples into a priestly hierarchy, but commanded their twelve chiefs to repeat the sacrificial ritual of offering his body and blood, then this picture needs to be radically called into question. Indeed, the Last Supper strongly suggests that Jesus envisioned a future time when the eschatological priesthood would be in force after his death, and that he sought to establish it in his absence.”³⁶⁵

³⁶⁶ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 83. He adds: “Because *the Temple was a miniature replica of the universe*, and because—as the rabbis contended—the ‘whole world’ was sustained by its liturgy, the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple meant nothing less than that the age of ‘this world’ was coming to its end, and the age of the ‘world to come’—the messianic age—would be objectively inaugurated. *Jesus apparently saw his death as thus ushering in the beginnings of a new creation*.”

³⁶⁷ Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” 83.

of God's covenant with Israel, and—as a prefiguration of the sacrificial bread of the New Covenant in Jesus, the true priest of the New Israel.

THE TABERNACLE—AND THE GLORY OF GOD

“Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and *the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle*.
And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode upon
it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.”

EXODUS 40:34-35

I. INTRODUCTION.

1. In this topic, we will examine the reality of the Tabernacle (“tent of meeting”) and the notion of God’s glory—as a pre-figurement of Jesus.³⁶⁸
2. Inasmuch as the tabernacle is a “vessel” containing within it the presence of God, we’ll also explore connections between the Tabernacle of the Old Testament and the Virgin Mary.

II. OPENING REMARKS:³⁶⁹

1. **GOD’S DWELLING PLACE—IN THE MIDST OF ISRAEL.** The tabernacle was the Lord’s tented sanctuary—and *dwelling place*—in the midst of Israel as they traveled from Sinai to Canaan (*Num.* 10–21).
 - a. Some do not realize that the Tabernacle was part of their experience *even while in the Promised Land*. Right up until the time that Solomon’s Temple was built, it survived as a sanctuary.³⁷⁰
 - b. However, the “*ark of the covenant*” was removed from the Tabernacle in the time of Eli³⁷¹ and never returned there. After the Lord delivered them from Egypt, he guided and protected them on their journey from Egypt through the wilderness to Sinai³⁷² by means of the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night:
 - **Exod. 13:21-22** “And the LORD went before them by day in a *pillar of cloud to lead them along the way*, and by night in a *pillar of fire* to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night; the *pillar of cloud* by day and the *pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people*.”
2. **THE HEAVENLY PATTERN.** God revealed Moses the pattern for the Tabernacle:
 - **Exod. 25:9** “*According to all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.*”³⁷³

³⁶⁸ For a verse-by-verse approach to the Tabernacle chapters, see N. M. Sarna, *Exodus* (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991). See also: T. D. Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch* (Carlisle/Grand Rapids: Paternoster Press/Baker Book House, 2002), ch. 15.

³⁶⁹ For a good introduction, see: R. E. Averbeck, “Tabernacle,” *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 807-27.

³⁷⁰ See: *II Sam.* 7:6; *I Ki.* 8:4; *II Chron.* 1:3–6.

³⁷¹ See: *I Sam.* ch. 4–6

³⁷² See: *Exod.* ch. 13–18.

³⁷³ See also: *Acts* 7:44; *Heb.* 8:5.

- **Exod. 25:40** “And see that you make them after the pattern for them, *which is being shown you on the mountain.*”
 - Its actual construction was undertaken by Bezalel and Oholiab with their assistants,³⁷⁴ with the Israelites providing the materials through voluntary contributions.³⁷⁵
 - The work was completed one year after the Exodus³⁷⁶ and nine months after Israel had arrived at Sinai.³⁷⁷
3. **THE HEAVENLY BLUEPRINT.** In accordance with the Lord’s specific requirements,³⁷⁸ they constructed the tabernacle, from the blueprint in heaven,³⁷⁹ while they camped there at Sinai for almost one year.³⁸⁰ On the day of its completion, the Lord promptly occupied the Tabernacle in his glory:
- **Exod. 40:34–38** “Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode upon it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would go onward; but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not go onward till the day that it was taken up. For throughout all their journeys the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.”
4. From that point forward continuously manifested his guiding and protecting presence to all the people in the form of *a cloud by day* with *fire in it by night* over the tabernacle.”³⁸¹

III. THE “GLORY” OF THE LORD IN HIS HOLY TABERNACLE.³⁸²

1. **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY.** Firstly, it must be understood that the larger purpose of the Tabernacle is holiness. Israel is called to “be holy,” for the Lord Himself is holy:
- **Lev. 11:44** “For I am the Lord your God; consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy.”
 - a. “In Scripture, holiness is exclusive to Yahweh; *the holiness of anything else is derived, either from God’s presence or from consecration to the sanctuary.*”³⁸³

³⁷⁴ *Exod.* 31:1–11; 36:1.

³⁷⁵ See: *Exod.* 25:1–7; 35:4–9, 20–29.

³⁷⁶ See: *Exod.* 40:2, 17.

³⁷⁷ See: *Exod.* 19:1.

³⁷⁸ See: *Exod.* ch. 25–31.

³⁷⁹ See: *Exod.* ch. 35–40.

³⁸⁰ See: *Exod.* 19:1; *Num.* 10:11.

³⁸¹ See: *Num.* 9:15–23; 10:11–12, 33–34.

³⁸² Note: beyond the remarks here on the topic of glory, more will be said in future chapters, e.g. Jesus, the dwelling place of God’s glory / the Word ‘tabernacling’ among us; as well as the Virgin Mary and the glory of God. For the sake of space, these will not be discussed here; moreover, they fit better in our examination of the Gospels as it relates to the Temple. Likewise, the topic of Mary as the ‘Ark of the New Covenant’ will be discussed later.

³⁸³ J. E. Hartely, “Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean,” *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 420 (emphasis added).

- b. The Tabernacle, as has been said, was the very dwelling of God with His people:
- **Exod. 25:8** “Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.”
- c. Importantly, the Hebrew verb “to dwell” (*shakan*) often used in reference to “*God’s presence with His people / God’s glory in the midst of His people*” has the same root as the term “Tabernacle” (*mishkan*).
- d. Moreover, the word for the “glory cloud” (Hebrew: *shekinah*) is from the same root as the word for the Temple itself—*mishkan*. Both reveal the glory of God!
- e. * In Scripture, to speak of *God’s glory in the midst of His people* is to speak of the Tabernacle—and to speak of the Tabernacle is to speak of *God’s presence with His people*.
2. **THE GLORY OF GOD—IN THE MOST HOLY PLACE.** Secondly, recalling our earlier insight, of how God reveals Himself on holy mountains—a key insight into the Tabernacle is that the “glory” (Hebrew: *kavod*) of God, manifest on His holy mountain (e.g., Sinai) is now present in the “most holy place” of the Tabernacle:
- **Exod. 40:34** “Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and *the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle*. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode upon it, *and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle*.”
- Likewise for the later Temple:
- **I Ki. 8:10-11** “And when the priests came out of *the holy place*, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; *for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord*.”³⁸⁴
3. **THE GLORY OF GOD.** Thirdly, all of these tabernacle / temple images, describing the “glory” of God filling the house of God, harken back to God’s original covenant with Moses at Sinai.
- **Exod. 19:18** “And *Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke*, because the Lord descended upon it *in fire*; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, *and God answered him in thunder*. *And 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*.”
4. On this point, recall our insight that originally Adam—and later, Moses and Israel was called to “expand” the Temple” of God over all the entire of creation. See: *Isa. 6:1-6*,³⁸⁵ *Num. 14:20-23*³⁸⁶ and *Hab. 2:14*.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁴ See also: *II Chron. 5:14; 7:1; Ezek. 10:4; 43:5; 44:5; Rev. 15:7-8* “And one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives for ever and ever; *and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God* and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were ended.”

³⁸⁵ *Isa. 6:1-3* “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim; each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.’”

³⁸⁶ *Num. 14:20-23* “Then the LORD said, ‘I have pardoned, according to your word; but truly, as I live, and as *all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD*, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs which I wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the proof these ten times and have

5. Fourth and finally, it follows that since the Tabernacle was the holy abode of God with His people, everything—and everyone associated with it was to be carefully and faithfully revered as holy:
- **Exod. 40:29** “Then you shall take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its furniture; *and it shall become holy.*”
 - **Exod. 28:2-3** “And you shall make *holy garments* for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. And you shall speak to all who have ability, whom I have endowed with an able mind, that they make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him for my priesthood.”
 - **Exod. 19:6** “and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”
 - **I Ki. 8:3-5** “And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the Lord, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up. And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered.”
 - **Lev. 10:1-3** “Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer, and put fire in it, and laid incense on it, and offered unholy fire before the Lord, such as he had not commanded them. And fire came forth from the presence of the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said to Aaron, ‘This is what the Lord has said, *‘I will show myself holy among those who are near me, and before all the people I will be glorified.’* And Aaron held his peace.”

IV. SPOTLIGHT: GOD IN THE MIDST OF HIS PEOPLE: CONGAR ON THE ‘GLORY CLOUD’

- **Congar:** “The Cloud is always linked to a *manifestation of God*. It signifies both *presence* and *transcendence*, it presupposes that *God comes down to earth* but that *He is in heaven*. This is why in Jewish and Christian eschatology the cloud is the sign of heaven *descending to earth* or of *a return to heaven ... The Glory* is a reality closely allied with the Cloud. In a sense, it is the same thing. Hence, the passages which mention the Glory are often combined with those that mention the Cloud. Yet there are slight differences in meaning. The cloud is rather *the phenomena and by means of which the Glory is revealed*. The Glory is *in a sense nearer to God ...*
- In His glory, his *kabod*, Yahweh makes His *transcendent majesty* and His *presence visible to men* by means of a phenomenon of light *connected with some sacred reality*: Mount Sinai;³⁸⁸ the tabernacle;³⁸⁹ and later, the Temple.³⁹⁰ This manifestation of God, confined during the period of the exile and of the Temple by the Chosen people, will later be spoken of by the prophets as destined to *‘spread the earth’ ...*”

not hearkened to my voice, shall see the land which I swore to give to their fathers; and none of those who despised me shall see it.”

³⁸⁷ *Hab.2:14* “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”

³⁸⁸ See: *Exod. 24:15-17*.

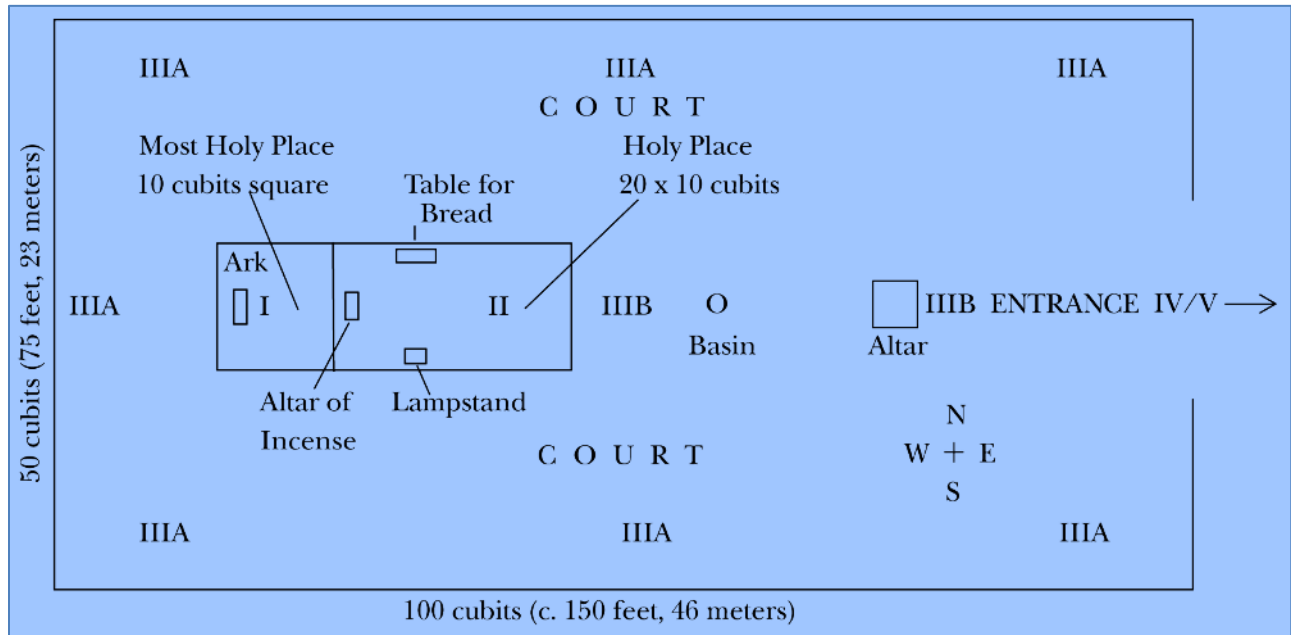
³⁸⁹ See: *Exod. 29:42; Num. 14:10; 16:19, 42; Heb. 17:7*.

³⁹⁰ See: *I Ki. 8:10-11; II. Chron. 5:13-14; 7:13*.

- “There was a certain local presence [of God in the tent or the ark or the later Temple]. God was there, *since He acted and manifested His will there. God really sat upon His throne above the cherubim ...* But He is not locally present absolutely speaking *as were the pagan gods represented by their idols ...* Above all, God is the mighty, living God *who intervenes and acts here below but who is not bound to any particular place.* There was a god of *this* spring, *that* tree, a god who cured men of *such and such* a disease in *such and such* a place, etc. But Yahweh is the one, omnipresent and all-sovereign God ... God is in the midst of Israel because Israel is *His* people, and in order to make Israel His people ... God is there to act and to make known His will; He is in the midst of His people and with them so as to fulfill His undertaking to lead them to the land of promise.”³⁹¹

³⁹¹ Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple*, 9-15.

ILLUSTRATION 3: THE DIMENSIONS OF THE TABERNACLE³⁹²



ZONE	DESCRIPTION	SCRIPTURE REFERENCES
INTERIOR		
I	Most Holy Place (<i>qodesh haqqōdeshim</i>)	<i>Exod.</i> 26:34; <i>I Ki.</i> 6:16; <i>I Chron.</i> 6:49; <i>II Chron.</i>
II	Holy Place (<i>haqqōdesh</i>)	<i>Êxod.</i> 26:33; 29:30; <i>Lev.</i> 6:30; <i>Num.</i> 3:28
I–II	Tabernacle (<i>mishkan</i>)	<i>Exod.</i> 25:9; 26:1, 7, 15, 26
III	Courtyard (<i>ḥ aṣ er</i>)	<i>Exod.</i> 7:9–19; <i>Num.</i> 4:26, 32
A	‘A holy place’ (<i>maqôm qadōsh</i>)	<i>Exod.</i> 29:31; <i>Lev.</i> 6:16, 26–27; 7:6; 10:13
B	Entrance to Tent of Meeting (<i>petah</i>)	<i>Exod.</i> 29:4, 32, 42; <i>Lev.</i> 1:3; 3:2; 12:6; 16:7
I–III	Sanctuary (<i>miqdāsh</i>)	<i>Exod.</i> 25:8; <i>Lev.</i> 12:4; 19:30; 20:3; <i>Num.</i> 3:28
EXTERIOR		
IV	“Clean” place (<i>maqôm tahôr</i>)	<i>Lev.</i> 4:12; 6:11; 10:14; <i>Num.</i> 19:9
V	“Unclean” place (<i>maqôm tamē’</i>)	<i>Lev.</i> 14:40, 41, 45

³⁹² Adapted from: R. E. Averbeck, “Tabernacle,” *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 808.

V. **TERMINOLOGY / DESCRIPTION OF THE TABERNACLE.** (See Illustration 3.)

1. **CLEAN/UNCLEAN.** A few things need to be said about the concept of *clean* and *unclean* in regard to the Tabernacle.

a. The terms *clean* / *unclean* must be distinguished from *holy* / *common*. To be clear: clean and unclean have to do with *ritual purity*.

- “The purpose of these rules governing clean and unclean “was to establish *boundaries* in the routine of daily life in order that the Israelites might live as a holy people serving Yahweh, who is holy. The *primary boundary* was to prevent any impure person or thing *from entering sacred space* ...all had to be ritually clean before entering the sanctuary *lest holiness consume them*.”³⁹³

b. **Clean.** Being *clean* does not render something / someone to be automatically holy—only that it is *pure and allowed to be used in a holy way*.

- There are *gradations* of holiness; but something / someone is either clean or unclean. As such, holiness is a *comparative concept*—whereas clean/unclean is a *concept of polarity*, i.e., one is either clean—or not.
- Example: Both a priest and the high priest may be ritually clean, but the high priest is holier given his office. Even if they high priest *became unclean* he was still holier than the priest that serves him.

c. **Unclean.** Similarly, *unclean* does not (necessarily) render something / something / someone unholy—only that the person/ object is *pure and allowed to be used in a holy way*.

- “Most causes of uncleanness come from a person’s body, the body of every person, both priest and laity, not from contact with certain classes or with foreigners.”³⁹⁴
- Still: a pagan is always unclean and *never* holy—they may never transgress the space around the Tabernacle. (Later, the “Court of the Gentiles” functioned as a space where Gentiles were welcome and could “come near” the holiness of God.)

2. **DUTY OF PRIESTS.** It was the duty of priests—above all the high priest to teach the people what is clean / unclean, and to administer over the people accordingly. This was done on a daily basis by priests who, through their sacrifices, *rendered the unclean as clean once again*. This was especially true, though, of the high priest:

- **Lev. 16:16** “Thus [the high priest] shall *make atonement for the holy place*, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions, all their sins; and so he shall do for the tent of meeting, *which abides with them in the midst of their uncleannesses*.”

3. **PRESERVING CLEANNESS.** Third, to preserve the purity of *Israel as a whole* and thus, to please God, all took strident precautions with regard to things such as:

- not eating certain “unclean” animals and birds;³⁹⁵

³⁹³ Hartely, “Clean and Unclean,” 426.

³⁹⁴ J. E. Hartely, “Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean,” 426.

³⁹⁵ See: *Lev.* 11:1–38, 41; cf. *Deut.* 14:3–20. Clean animals had to be slaughtered properly; no animal could be eaten which had died of natural causes (*Deut.* 14:21) or had been torn by beasts (*Lev.* 17:15) or which still contained blood (*Gen.* 9:3–4; *Lev.* 17:11ff; *Deut.* 12:23).

- in the period before, during and after childbirth;³⁹⁶
- in avoiding certain diseases, especially leprosy;³⁹⁷
- with regard to bodily discharges;³⁹⁸
- coming in contact with dead bodies;³⁹⁹
- and captured spoil.⁴⁰⁰

4. THREEFOLD DISTINCTION OF THE INTERIOR OF THE TABERNACLE.

1. Overall construction.

- The tabernacle consisted of an outer structure that defined the public court and a smaller structure, the tabernacle proper, which was divided into the holy place and the holy of holies. The tabernacle proper consisted of gold-plated boards each 10 cubits⁴⁰¹ high and 1.5 cubits.⁴⁰²

³⁹⁶ See: *Lev.* 12:1-8; *Deut.* 14:3-20. “The law regarding the uncleanness of childbirth (*Lev.* 12:2ff.) can best be seen against the backdrop of the curse put on women at the time of Eve’s sin in the Garden (*Gen.* 3:16). The OT relates childbirth to God’s curse over mankind due to sin; Job implies this (*Job* 14:4), and David alludes to it (*Psa.* 51:5). When the woman delivered a male child, she would be *unclean for seven days*. During the next thirty-three days she was required to remain ‘*in the blood of her purification*’ and was forbidden to touch holy objects or enter the holy place until the period of her purification had been completed (*Lev.* 12:2-4) ... She was excluded from participating in the sacrifices for *forty* days after the birth of her son. (See: *Luke* 2:22 Mary observed her days of purification before she and Joseph presented her son Jesus to the Lord in Jerusalem.) The prescribed offering for purification was a *burnt offering* consisting of a year-old lamb (*Lev.* 11:6) and a sin offering of a dove or a turtledove. Should the woman be poverty-stricken, she was permitted to sacrifice two turtledoves, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering (see: *Luke* 2:24). Once the sacrifices of purification were tendered, the priest made atonement for her *and the woman was declared clean.*”

³⁹⁷ See: *Lev.* 13:1-14:57. “This purification procedure was rather complex. First the unclean person, who had been examined by the priest outside of the camp, was to sacrifice two live, clean birds, cedar wood, crimson, and hyssop. One of the two birds was to be killed in an earthen vessel over running water, and its blood was to be sprinkled on the unclean person; the other bird, having been dipped in the blood of the slaughtered bird, was to be released (*Lev.* 14:2-8). Then the leper had to wash himself, shave his hair, and wash his clothes. Once the ritual was completed, he was permitted to enter the camp, but not yet his tent (14:8). Seven days later the person was to bathe once more, shave himself again, and wash his clothes a second time (14:9). The next day he had to sacrifice two male lambs, one ewe lamb, a cereal offering, and a ‘log’ (2/3 pint) of oil, as well as a guilt offering of one male lamb. The priest then anointed the diseased person with blood and oil on the right earlobe, thumb, and big toe, and with oil on the head. Finally, the priest made atonement by presenting a sin offering, a burnt offering, and a cereal offering.” Myers, “Clean and Unclean,” in: *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 222.

³⁹⁸ See: *Lev.* 15:1-33. “Various forms of excretions or emissions of blood, semen, and other fluids, particularly those associated with sexual or reproductive functions, were sources of uncleanness. These might include semen produced either intentionally, as in sexual intercourse (*Lev.* 15:18), or unintentionally, as in nocturnal emission or illness (vv. 2-17). Women were rendered unclean through intercourse as well as during menstruation (vv. 16-19); a man who had sexual contact with a menstruating woman was also unclean for seven days (v. 24). Persons suffering continuous discharge were regarded as perpetually unclean (vv. 2-12, 25-28). Clothing, furnishings, and vessels which a person used while thus unclean were also rendered impure.” Myers, “Clean and Unclean,” in: *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, 223.

³⁹⁹ See: *Lev.* 11:39-40.

⁴⁰⁰ See: *Num.* 31:23-24.

⁴⁰¹ Or 14.6 feet.

⁴⁰² Or 26.3 in. wide.

- Twenty boards each were on the south and north sides, with eight (six plus the two corner boards) on the west side. Every board was placed in two *silver pedestals*, having external *golden rings* through which cross-boards were slid.
 - The east side remained open, closed off by a curtain [see Illustration].
 - Over the wooden frame were placed curtains made from four materials: a double layer of multicolored fine linen curtains embroidered with *cherubim*, a double layer of goat’s-hair curtains, and an outer covering made of rams’ skins dyed red and *tah ash* (i.e. “goatskins”).⁴⁰³
 - A multicolored, embroidered veil of *fine linen*, hanging on four pillars of *acacia wood* overlaid with *gold*, divided the Tabernacle into the *most holy place*, which was a cube 10 cubits,⁴⁰⁴ and the *Holy Place*, 20 cubits⁴⁰⁵ and 10 cubits wide and high.⁴⁰⁶
 - The ark of the covenant was sheltered in the holy of holies.
 - In the *Holy Place* were the table of the *Bread of the Presence* on the north side, the golden lampstand on the south side, and the golden incense altar in front of the veil of the *Holy of Holies*.
 - The *Holy Place* was separated from the court outside by a curtain of fine linen hanging on five pillars of acacia wood.⁴⁰⁷
2. **THREEFOLD DIMENSION:** There was a threefold dimension of the Tabernacle: the *Most Holy Place*; the *Holy Place*; and the *Courts*, as follows:
- a. **MOST HOLY PLACE** [Zone I in Illustration—above]. In terms of the sacred space in the Tabernacle, the “*Most Holy Place*” (*qodesh haqqōdeshim*) was the area *dedicated to God’s presence*; all other space was common in comparison to it.
 - b. **The Holy Place.** [Zone II in Illustration—above.]
 - c. **The Courts.** [Zone III in Illustration—above.]
 - d. **The Exterior.** *People, objects, space and time* could be described as “holy.” Thus the sanctuary was *holy*, while the camp was *common*. However, when the camp was *compared* to the area outside the camp, the camp itself was *holy* while the surrounding area was *common*.⁴⁰⁸
3. **EARLIER SCRIPTURAL PARALLELS TO THE ‘SACRED SPACE’ OF THE TABERNACLE.**
- a. **Creation / cosmos.** The correspondence between “temple of creation” (Gen. 1-2) and the Tabernacle / Temple were previously discussed.
 - b. **Burning Bush.** Yahweh appeared to Moses at ‘the mountain of God’—where God made his special dwelling place.⁴⁰⁹ . This was “holy ground”,⁴¹⁰ and it was

⁴⁰³ See: Myers, “Tabernacle,” in: *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, 980.

⁴⁰⁴ 14.6 feet on each side.

⁴⁰⁵ 29.2 feet long.

⁴⁰⁶ 14.6 feet wide and high.

⁴⁰⁷ See: Myers, “Tabernacle,” in: *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, 980.

⁴⁰⁸ J. E. Hartely, “Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean,” *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 426.

⁴⁰⁹ See: *Exod.* 3:1–2; 4:27; 18:5; 19:2; 24:13.

⁴¹⁰ *Exod.* 3:5.

there that the Lord promised not only to be “with” Moses as he brought Israel out of Egypt but also to bring him back there to worship God “*on this mountain.*”⁴¹¹

- c. **Pillar of Cloud / fire.** The LORD was traveling before them *by day in a pillar of cloud* to lead them on the way and *by night in a pillar of fire* to give them light so they could travel day and night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night departed from before the people.”⁴¹²
- d. **High Priest / Moses.** Like Moses, who prayed to “see Thy glory,” but was prevented from doing so, the High Priest could not “see” the glory God / God’s face. As he entered the *Most Holy Place* on the Day of Atonement, he swung a censer, which filled the *Most Holy Place* with fragrant white smoke—reminiscent of Moses on Sinai. In the later Temple, the high priest not only went “in” to the *Most Holy Place*, but *actually ascended to it—like Sinai, it was atop the Temple.*

4. TRANSPORTING THE ARK.

- a. It must be remembered that the Tabernacle was designed to be *portable*, movable—as the Israelites made their way through the wilderness toward the Promised Land.
- b. When the tabernacle and its contents were moved from place to place, the boards and curtains of the tent could be carried on ox carts, but its furnishings were to be mounted on acacia-wood poles and carried by Levites.⁴¹³
- c. The poles used to carry the Ark of the Covenant were never to be removed from their position in the rings mounted on the sides of the ark.
- d. Above all, the Levites who carried the tabernacle furnishings were never to touch them, on *pain of death*.⁴¹⁴ When David retrieved the ark from its Philistine captors, it was transported by ox cart. During that journey Uzzah put out his hand to steady the ark on the tottering cart, immediately forfeiting his life.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹¹ *Exod.* 3:12.

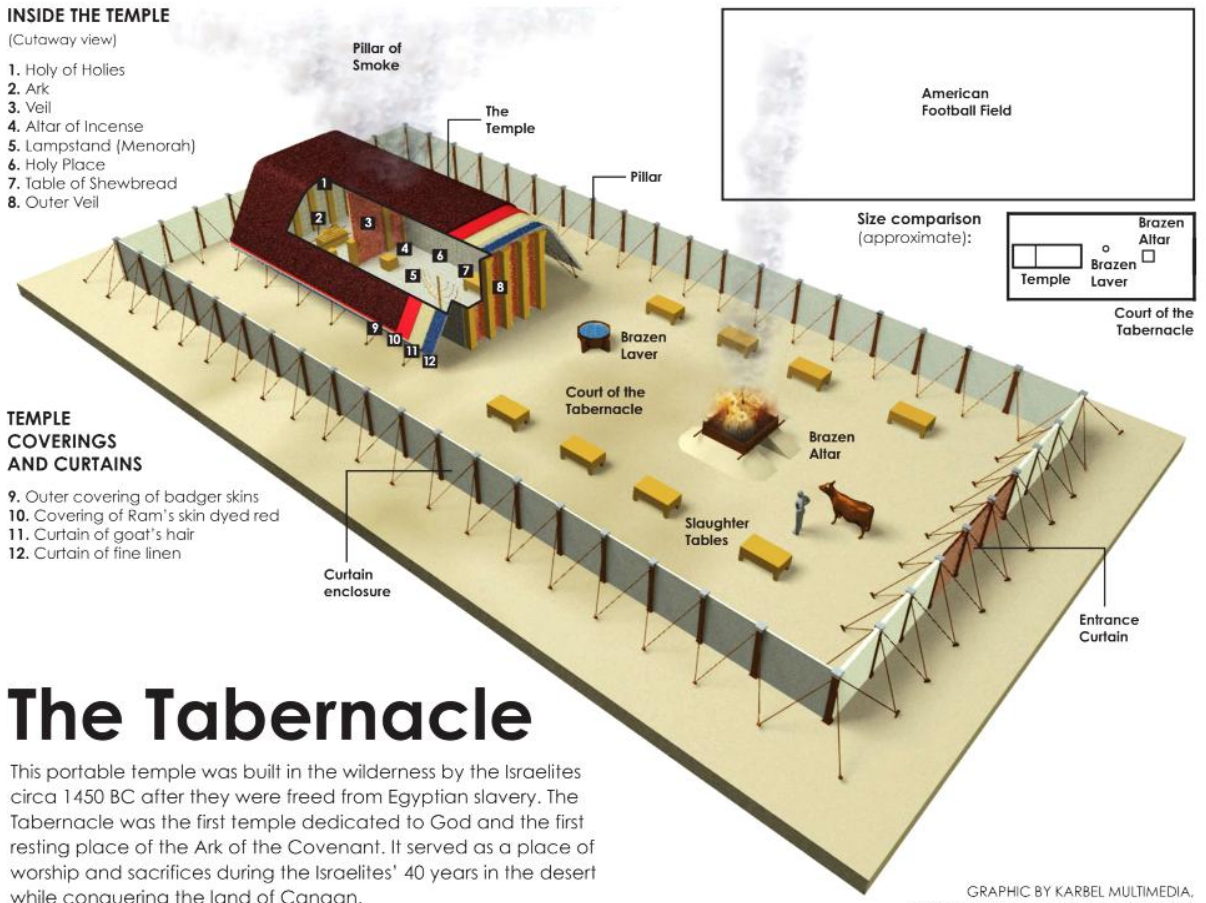
⁴¹² *Exod.* 13:21–22.

⁴¹³ *Exod.* 25:12–15, 26–28; 27:6–7; 30:4–5; *Num.* 4:1–15; 7:6–9.

⁴¹⁴ *Num.* 4:15 “And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, as the camp sets out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry these, but they must not touch the holy things, lest they die.”

⁴¹⁵ See: *II Sam.* 6:2–7.

ILLUSTRATION 4: INSIDE THE TABERNACLE



The Tabernacle

This portable temple was built in the wilderness by the Israelites circa 1450 BC after they were freed from Egyptian slavery. The Tabernacle was the first temple dedicated to God and the first resting place of the Ark of the Covenant. It served as a place of worship and sacrifices during the Israelites' 40 years in the desert while conquering the land of Canaan.

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THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON⁴¹⁶

“When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and *the glory of the LORD filled the temple*. And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD’s house. When all the children of Israel saw the fire come down and *the glory of the LORD upon the temple*, they bowed down with their faces to the earth on the pavement, and worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying, ‘*For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.*’”

II CHRONICLES 7:1-3

I. THE NECESSITY OF ZION

1. **Levering:** “If Sinai were not followed by Zion, God would be related to Israel simply through the covenantal event on Sinai ... through observance of [the] Torah. God would relate to human beings *fundamentally through the gift of law ... Yet Sinai is not the only covenant.*”⁴¹⁷
2. The Temple was a place of “electrifying holiness.”⁴¹⁸ Jerusalem and the Temple form a “conduit through which messages pass *from heaven to earth*, no matter where, in a geographical sense, they originated.”⁴¹⁹
3. **THE TEMPLE AND THE COVENANT**
 - **II Sam. 7:12-13** “When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. *He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.*”⁴²⁰
 - **Psa. 89:3-4, 34-36** “Thou hast said, ‘*I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant: I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations’ ... I will not violate my covenant, or alter the word that went forth from my lips. Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David. His line shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before me.*”⁴²¹

⁴¹⁶ NOTE: In order to streamline / consolidate our presentation, prudential choices were necessary as to what can / cannot be discussed here. As such, *three key features*—all of which are extremely relevant to any discussion of Solomon’s Temple—will be discussed in the New Testament section of the course. Please watch for the following features in later sessions, specifically: (1) *the Day of Atonement*; (2) *the Bread of the Presence*; and (3) *the primary Temple festivals* (Passover, Tabernacles, etc.)

⁴¹⁷ Levering, *Christ’s Fulfillment of Temple and Torah. Salvation According to Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 84.

⁴¹⁸ Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 77.

⁴¹⁹ Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 125.

⁴²⁰ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 52. “Though 2 Samuel 7 makes no reference to a covenant *per se*, the fact that God’s *promise* to David was ensured by a covenantal oath is clear from other passages in Scripture.” Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 52. See for example: *Psa.* 89 (above); also *Psa.* 110, 132.

⁴²¹ “Psalm 89 is clearly based on the divine promise found in 2 Samuel 7. It was composed after the fall of the Davidic dynasty and cries out to God for its restoration.” Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 52.

- “In 2 Samuel 7, we read about the establishment of the Davidic covenant. In this chapter there are a series of puns on the Hebrew word for ‘house’: God promises David a *dynasty* (a ‘throne’ or royal house’, v. 13) through an heir (a son—‘house’ here literally means family, v. 11) who will *build a temple for Yahweh* (the Lord’s house’, v. 13). Further, God swears to David’s offspring *the gift of divine sonship*—‘I will be his father, and he will be my son’ (v. 14). Finally, God promises that the Davidic throne will last forever (vv. 13-16).”
- “*The Temple was the embodiment of the covenant of David*, in which the triple relationship between Yahweh, the House of David, and the people of Israel was established.”⁴²²

II. THE DESIGN OF THE TEMPLE

1. **Edersheim:** “The ocean surrounding the world is the white of the eye; its black is the world itself; the pupil is Jerusalem; *but the image within the pupil is the Sanctuary.*”⁴²³
2. **I Chron. 22:5-6** “For David said, ‘Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and *the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, of fame and glory throughout all lands*; I will therefore make preparation for it.’ *So David provided materials in great quantity before his death.*”
3. **II Chron. 2:1-2** “Now Solomon purposed to build a temple for the name of the LORD, and a royal palace for himself. And Solomon assigned *seventy thousand men* to bear burdens and *eighty thousand* to quarry in the hill country, and *three thousand six hundred* to oversee them.”
4. **II Chron. 2:4-9** “Behold, I am about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God and dedicate it to him for the burning of incense of sweet spices before him, and for the continual offering of the Bread of the Presence, and for *burnt offerings morning and evening*, on the Sabbaths and the new moons and the appointed feasts of the LORD our God, as ordained forever for Israel. *The house which I am to build will be great, for our God is greater than all gods.* But who is able to build him a house, since heaven, even highest heaven, cannot contain him? Who am I to build a house for him, except as a place to burn incense before him? *So now send me a man skilled to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue fabrics, trained also in engraving, to be with the skilled workers who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom David my father provided. Send me also cedar, cypress, and algum timber from Lebanon, for I know that your servants know how to cut timber in Lebanon.* And my servants will be with your servants, to prepare timber for me in abundance, *for the house I am to build will be great and wonderful.*”

⁴²² Toomo Ishida, *The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel. A Study on the Formation and Development of Royal-Dynastic Ideology*, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 142 (New York: W. de Gruyter, 1977), 145 (emphasis added). See: Hahn, *Letter & Spirit: Temple and Contemplation*, 109.

⁴²³ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 39. He adds: “The purple light on the mountains of Moab was fast fading out. Across the city *the sinking sun cast a rich glow over the pillared cloisters of the Temple*, and over the silent courts as they rose terrace upon terrace. From where they stood they could see over the closed Beautiful Gate, and right to the entrance to the Holy Place, *which now glittered with gold*; while the eastern walls and the deep valley below were thrown into a solemn shadow, creeping, as the orb sunk lower, further and further towards the summit of [the Mount of Olives], *irradiated with one parting gleam of roseate light, after all below was sunk in obscurity*” (pp. 59-60).

III. THE FEATURES & FURNISHINGS OF THE TEMPLE.⁴²⁴

1. MOST HOLY PLACE / HOLY OF HOLIES

- a. Recall that the *Holy of Holies* represented heaven—the dwelling place of God. Behind the veil were two massive cherubim.⁴²⁵ Together, they formed a golden chariot throne of God.
- b. The only tabernacle furnishings in the most holy place were the ark with the mercy seat⁴²⁶—and possibly the altar of incense.⁴²⁷
- c. Once a year, on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, the High Priest—and only the High Priest—entered the *Holy of Holies* to offer a sacrifice for the sins of all Israel. The high priest sacrificed a goat (below) and sprinkled its blood on the mercy seat,⁴²⁸ the rectangular slab of pure gold that covered the *Ark of the Covenant*.⁴²⁹
- d. After the sacrifices were offered outside the *Holy of Holies*, he would enter and offer incense and prayers to God.⁴³⁰ *I Kings* informs us that when the Ark was recovered from the Philistines, Solomon placed it in the Temple.⁴³¹
- e. Solomon worshiped before the Ark after his dream in which the Lord promised him wisdom.⁴³²
- f. Prior to its placement in the Temple, the Ark contained: a golden jar containing some of the *manna* from the Israelites' trek in the wilderness, and the *rod of Aaron* that budded.⁴³³

⁴²⁴ See “Blueprint of Solomon’s Temple” in Appendix.

⁴²⁵ The cherubim were 15 feet high with a wingspan of 15 feet wide.

⁴²⁶ *Exod.* 26:31–34 “And you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet stuff and fine twined linen; in skilled work shall it be made, with cherubim; and you shall hang it upon four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, with hooks of gold, upon four bases of silver. And you shall hang the veil from the clasps, and bring the ark of the testimony [covenant] in thither within the veil; and the veil shall separate for you the holy place from the most holy. You shall put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy place.”

⁴²⁷ *Heb.* 9:3–4 “Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the *Holy of Holies*, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.”

⁴²⁸ Hebrew: *kapporet*; Greek: *hilisterion*.

⁴²⁹ *Exod.* 25:17–22 “Then you shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two ends of the mercy seat. Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end; of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on its two ends. The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, their faces one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark; and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you of all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel.”

⁴³⁰ See the account of Zechariah in *Luke* ch. 1.

⁴³¹ See: *I Ki.* 8:6–9.

⁴³² See: *I Ki.* 3:15. The ‘*Holy of Holies*’ was prepared to receive the Ark (*I Ki.* 6:19); and when the Temple was dedicated, the Ark—containing nothing but the two Mosaic tables of the *Torah*—was placed therein.

⁴³³ See: *Exod.* 16:32–34; *Heb.* 9:4.

g. Later, they were removed prior to the building of Temple, there “*was nothing in the Ark except the two stone tablets.*”⁴³⁴ When the priest emerged from the Holy of Holies, after placing the Ark there, the Temple was filled with a cloud, “*for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.*”⁴³⁵

2. THE HOLY PLACE.

- a. Along with the *Most Holy Place*, the *Holy Place* was an enclosed space.⁴³⁶ It was entered through a narthex. Within the sanctuary of the *Holy Place* were the lampstands, the table with the 12 cakes *Bread of the Presence* upon it (one for each of the 12 tribes of Israel), and the *Altar of Incense*.
- b. The *Holy Place* / *Most Holy Place* were separated by an embroidered veil.

3. THE COURT OF THE ISRAELITES.

- a. The *Holy Place* / *Most Holy Place* were within the rear of the layout of the Temple, in the “Court of the Israelites.”
- b. Only Israelite men were allowed in this area—and only Levites / Levitical priests were allowed into the *Holy Place*.
- c. The *Nicanor Gate* separated the Court of Women from the Court of the Israelites.⁴³⁷ The *Nicanor Gate* was the only gate in the Temple that was not gilded, [but] formed of “Corinthian copper that shone like gold.”⁴³⁸
- d. Within the Court of the Israelites, the most prominent features were the “*Altar of Unhewn Stones*”⁴³⁹ and the bronze *Laver*.
- e. **The Alter of Unhewn Stones.**
 - The altar was a square of 48,’ and, inclusive of ‘the horns,’ 15’ high.⁴⁴⁰ Around it was a “circuit,” for the use of the ministering priests, who, as a rule, “*always passed round by the right, and retired by the left.*”⁴⁴¹ The circuit was 9’ off the ground, and 1.5’ high. Close by was the great heap of salt, from which every sacrifice must be salted with salt.⁴⁴²
 - On the altar,⁴⁴³ *three fires burned*, one for the offerings, a second for incense, a third to supply the means for kindling the other two.⁴⁴⁴

⁴³⁴ *I Ki.* 8:9.

⁴³⁵ See: *I Ki.* 8:10-11.

⁴³⁶ Sometimes referred to as the “sanctuary.”

⁴³⁷ “According to an inscription on a sarcophagus discovered in a cave on Mt. Scopus, it was named for the first-century A.D. Alexandrian craftsman who made the gates.” Myers, *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, 762.

⁴³⁸ Myers, *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, 762.

⁴³⁹ “They were ‘whitened’ twice a year. Once in seven years the high-priest was to inspect the Most Holy Place, through an opening made from the room above. If repairs were required, the workmen were let down through the ceiling in a sort of cage, so as not to see anything but what they were to work at.” Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services as They Were at the Time of Jesus Christ*. (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2003).

⁴⁴⁰ See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 54.

⁴⁴¹ See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 54.

⁴⁴² See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 54.

⁴⁴³ 36 feet wide on top.

⁴⁴⁴ See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 54.

- The 4 ‘horns’ of the altar were straight, hollow protrusions with two openings, into whose silver funnels *drink-offerings*, and, at the *Feast of Tabernacles*, the water from the *Pool of Siloam*, were poured.
 - A *red line* around the middle of the altar marked “that *above* it the blood of sacrifices intended to be eaten, *below* it that of sacrifices wholly consumed, was to be sprinkled.”⁴⁴⁵
 - The system of drainage into chambers below, all of which could be flushed at will, was perfect; *the blood and water*⁴⁴⁶ being swept down into Kidron Valley.⁴⁴⁷
- f. **The Laver.**
- Edersheim: “Indeed, the water supply to the Sanctuary is among the most wonderful of its arrangements.”⁴⁴⁸
 - Near the altar was the immense laver of brass, supported by 12 colossal lions, “which drained every evening, and filled every morning by machinery, and where twelve priests could wash at the same time.”⁴⁴⁹
 - “And, as if this had not been sufficient, the ground is perfectly honeycombed with a series of remarkable *rock-hewn cisterns*, in which the water, brought by an aqueduct from *Solomon’s Pools*, near *Bethlehem*, was stored.”⁴⁵⁰
 - The cisterns were connected by a system of channels cut out of rock. When one was full the surplus ran into the next, etc. The overflow was carried into the Kidron Valley below.⁴⁵¹
 - “One of the cisterns—that known as *the Great Sea*—would contain *two million gallons*; and the total number of gallons which could be stored probably exceeded ten millions”⁴⁵²
- g. Also within the Court of the Israelites were also a number of chambers, e.g., the *Golah*, “for the water apparatus which emptied and filled the laver; and the wood-chamber. Above and beyond it were the apartments of the high-priest and the council-chamber of the ‘*honorable councilors*,’ or priestly council for affairs strictly connected with the Temple.”⁴⁵³
- h. The “*Chamber of the Hearth*” contained four smaller chambers. In one of the sub-chambers priest bread makers baked the Bread of the Presence. In another, six lambs were set aside for the ‘*olat tamid*’⁴⁵⁴ (below), the *Morning and Evening offering*. Yet another sub-chamber contained a *miqvaoth* (immersion baths) for

⁴⁴⁵ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 54-55.

⁴⁴⁶ See: *John* 19:34.

⁴⁴⁷ See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 54. See: *Lev.* 2:13; *Num.* 18:19.

⁴⁴⁸ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 55.

⁴⁴⁹ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 55.

⁴⁵⁰ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 56.

⁴⁵¹ See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 56-57.

⁴⁵² Edersheim, *The Temple*, 56-57.

⁴⁵³ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 53. For more details see this section of Edersheim’s classic work.

⁴⁵⁴ On the *tamid*, see: *Exod.* 29:38-42; *Num.* 28:1-8; *II Ki.* 16:15; *Ezek.* 46:13-15; *Neh.* 10:34; *II Chron.* 13:11.

priests to immerse themselves before entering the sanctuary—or offering sacrifices at the altar.

- i. A final sub-chamber was reserved for the high priest—who had his own apartment in the Court of the Gentiles; also rising above the Court of the Israelites were the *beth-moked*, apartments for priests whose division on duty in the Temple.

4. THE COURT OF THE GENTILES.

- a. The great *Court of the Gentiles*, which formed the lowest or outer enclosure of the Temple, was “*paved with the finest variegated marble.*”⁴⁵⁵
- b. According to Jewish tradition, it formed a square of 750 feet.
- c. Its name derives from the fact that it was *open to all*—Jews or Gentiles—“*provided they observed the prescribed rules of decorum and reverence.*”⁴⁵⁶
- d. The *Court of the Gentiles* contained apartments for the (non-priestly) Levites, as well as a *synagogue*.⁴⁵⁷
- e. *Temple Porches*: “The view from this ‘Royal Bridge’ must have been splendid. *It was over it that they led the Savior, in sight of all Jerusalem, to and from the palace of the high-priest, that of Herod, the meeting-place of the Sanhedrim, and the judgment-seat of Pilate.* Here the city would have lain spread before us like a map. Beyond it the eye would wander over *straggling suburbs, orchards, and many gardens—fairest among them the royal gardens to the south, the ‘garden of roses’* ...till the horizon was bounded by the hazy outline of mountains in the distance.”⁴⁵⁸

IV. THE SACRIFICES OF THE TEMPLE

1. PRIESTLY SACRIFICES IN GENERAL.

- a. **Edersheim**: “Every unprejudiced reader of the Bible must feel that sacrifices constitute the center of the Old Testament.”⁴⁵⁹
- b. “The fundamental ideas which underlay [the priesthood] connected it into a harmonious whole, were reconciliation and mediation: the one expressed by typically atoning sacrifices, the other by a typically intervening priesthood. Even the Hebrew term for priest (*kohen*) denotes in its root-meaning ‘one who stands up for another, and mediates in his cause.’”⁴⁶⁰
- c. “...There was yet another idea to be expressed by the priesthood. The object of reconciliation was holiness. Israel was to be ‘a holy nation’—reconciled through the ‘sprinkling of blood;’ brought near to, and kept in fellowship with God by that means. The priesthood, as the mediators of the people, was also to show forth the ‘holiness’ of Israel.”⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁵ See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 45–46.

⁴⁵⁶ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 45–46.

⁴⁵⁷ See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 46.

⁴⁵⁸ See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 43 (emphasis added).

⁴⁵⁹ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 106. “The fundamental idea of sacrifice in the Old Testament is that of *substitution*, which again seems to imply everything else—atonement and redemption, vicarious punishment and forgiveness” (p. 107, emphasis added).

⁴⁶⁰ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 84–85 (emphasis added).

⁴⁶¹ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 85.

- d. “One element only was still wanting—that this Son of David, this Sufferer and Conqueror, should be shown to be our Substitute, to whom also the sacrificial types had pointed.”⁴⁶²

2. **ELEVEN REQUIRED PUBLIC SACRIFICES.**⁴⁶³

- a. *Tamid* (daily morning and evening sacrifices)
- b. The additional *tamid* for the Sabbath
- c. Sacrifices for the New Moon;
- d. Passover sacrifices;
- e. The Passover lamb itself;
- f. Pentecostal sacrifices;
- g. Those brought with the two first loaves;
- h. New Year’s sacrifices;
- i. Day of Atonement sacrifices;
- j. Tabernacles sacrifices—one the first day thereof;
- k. Tabernacles sacrifices—one the on the octave thereof.⁴⁶⁴

3. **FORGIVENESS / RECONCILIATION.**

- a. It is important to see that the entire sacrificial system provided a means of reconciliation with God, through the forgiveness of sins. Various offerings, when properly administered, also rendered one “clean”—regardless of whether one had sinned or not.⁴⁶⁵
- b. Yet, it must be added that in no way was there in Israel the idea of “forgiveness of all sins”—this is an “innovation” of the New Testament, in Jesus Christ.
- c. “*Cut off*.” A frequent formula that pertains to punishment for sin is the literal expression “*That soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel / my presence*”. It refers to expulsion from the community. Reasons for expulsion from the community often for disregard of cultic regulations (e.g. “*desecration*” of sacred time / substance / place’ profaning God’s holy name.⁴⁶⁶
- d. Moreover, for outrageous sins, the Mosaic law prescribed the physical penalty of death.⁴⁶⁷
- e. Still, God indeed *forgives*:
 - **Exod. 34:6-7** “The LORD passed before him, and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love [Hebrew: *hesed*] and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

⁴⁶² Edersheim, *The Temple*, 124.

⁴⁶³ Most of the sacrifices are described in *Lev.* ch 1-7. See also: Edersheim, “Sacrifices: Their Order and Meaning” in: *The Temple*, 74-104; *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, 790-802.

⁴⁶⁴ See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 111.

⁴⁶⁵ See discussion of “clean / unclean” in a previous topic.

⁴⁶⁶ E. A. Martens, “Sin, Guilt,” in: *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 772. See: *Exod.* 12:15; 30:33, 38; *Lev.* 7:20, 25, 27.

⁴⁶⁷ See: *Exod.* 21:15-17; *Lev.* 20:10-16; 24:10-17; *Deut.* 21:18-21; 24:16; *Num.* 18:22; 27:3.

f. Access to God’s forgiveness came through prescribed offerings in the Temple, (described below).⁴⁶⁸

4. **FIVE MAIN TYPES OF SACRIFICES.**⁴⁶⁹ There were five main types of offerings:

a. **Burnt offerings.**⁴⁷⁰

- **Terminology:** Hebrew: *olah*; Latin: *holocaust*.
- **Definition:** a “whole offering” in which the entire animal was offered up upon the altar, and ascended to God “in the form of smoke and a savory scent.”⁴⁷¹ Its blood was sprinkled on the altar. The hide was given to the priest.
- **Importance:** it has rightly been called the *sacrificium latreuticum*, or *sacrifice of devotion and service*. Day by day it formed the regular morning and evening sacrifice in the Temple, while on Sabbaths, new moons, and festivals additional burnt-offerings followed ordinary worship.⁴⁷²
- **Features:** a bloody sacrifice: unblemished male lamb; goat, ram, etc. Burnt offerings symbolized *total self-surrender* to God. It could be brought forth by Gentiles as well as Jews.
- **Example:** *Tamid*: daily morning and evening sacrifice.⁴⁷³

b. **Cereal offerings.**⁴⁷⁴

- **Terminology:** often called “meat” or “cereal” offering (Hebrew: *minchah*, “gift”). Sometimes known as a “tributary” offering; as a gift offering to the Lord.
- **Definition:** an unbloody sacrifice, offered as an “auxiliary sacrifice” with animal sacrifices.⁴⁷⁵
- **Features:**
- Unleavened wheat or barley grain, It could be baked, unbaked, griddled or uncooked. If baked as bread, it was made with fine corn flour, sometimes as in the form of wafers.
- The grain was mixed or anointed with oil.
- Wine was frequently poured out with grain offerings as a “libation” to the Lord.
- The priest would throw a handful onto the fire of the altar; the remainder was eaten as consecrated bread by priests.
- **Examples:** The Bread of the Presence;⁴⁷⁶ Grain Offerings at priestly ordination.⁴⁷⁷ It was called “the perfect sacrifice of the Gentiles.”⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁶⁸ See: *Lev.* 4:1–6:7.

⁴⁶⁹ See *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, 792-93; Edersheim, *The Temple*, 93-103.

⁴⁷⁰ See: *Lev.* 1:3-7; 6:8-13; also: *Exod.* 29:38-42.

⁴⁷¹ *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, 792.

⁴⁷² See: Edersheim, *The Temple*, 126–127.

⁴⁷³ See: *Exod.* 29:38-46.

⁴⁷⁴ See: *Lev.* 2:1-16; 6:14-23.

⁴⁷⁵ *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, 793.

⁴⁷⁶ See: *Exod.* 25:30; *Num.* 4:7.

c. **PEACE OFFERINGS.**⁴⁷⁹

- **Terminology:** “offering of peace” or “completion” (Hebrew: *zebah shelamim*). Also called a “fellowship / communion” offering or “thanksgiving” (*todah*) offering.
- **Definition:** a bloody sacrifice, offered in thanksgiving to God for some specific action of deliverance (illness, etc.)
- **Features:** A flock or herd animal was divided into several parts. Its blood was sprinkled on the altar. One-third was consumed on the altar itself and one-third was reserved for the priest as consecrated food. The final third was eaten by the worshipper, in communion with his family. Rabbinic tradition considered the sole sacrifice of the coming messianic age.⁴⁸⁰
- **Examples:** One hundred and forty-two lambs were offered in thanksgiving at the Temple’s Dedication;⁴⁸¹ a *todah* liturgy, offered as a “sacrifice of thanksgiving”⁴⁸² once the worshipper was able to come to the Temple. In the Greek Old Testament (LXX),⁴⁸³ the Hebrew word *todah* (“thanksgiving”) is represented by the Greek term *eucharistia*; the “thanksgiving” psalms in the *Psalter* derive from such liturgies.⁴⁸⁴

d. **SIN OFFERINGS.**⁴⁸⁵

- **Terminology:** purification offering (Hebrew: *hattat*).
- **Definition:** A bloody sacrifice; blood was sprinkled on the altar: the fat portions and kidneys were burned; a meat portion given to the priest; the remainder was burned outside the camp or destroyed. The entire rite conveyed *forgiveness upon individuals*. As such, blood may have been smeared on the worshipper by the priest.
- **NOTE:** The sin offering was also the primary offering for those in a state of uncleanness *which, it will be recalled, was not (necessarily) the result of sin*.
- To clarify, in such cases, the sin offering function as *cultic purification and not for the forgiveness of sins*.
- Examples: after childbirth,⁴⁸⁶ leprosy,⁴⁸⁷ or bodily emissions.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁷⁷ See: *Lev.* 6:19-22; 8:25-29.

⁴⁷⁸ *Mal.* 1:11; see: *Lev.* 6:20

⁴⁷⁹ See: *Lev.* 3:1-17; 7:11-36.

⁴⁸⁰ More will be said about this in a subsequent topic.

⁴⁸¹ See: *I Ki.* 8:63.

⁴⁸² See: *Lev.* 7:11

⁴⁸³ We will refer to the Greek Old Testament as such. Its technical term is “Septuagint,” often abbreviated as ‘LXX.’

⁴⁸⁴ *Psa.* 50; 51:17; 54:6; 56:12; 116:17-18.

⁴⁸⁵ See: *Lev.* 4:1-5:13; 6:24-30.

⁴⁸⁶ *Lev.* 12:6; see: Mary in the Temple (“purification”) in *Luke* 2:22 “And when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses ...”

⁴⁸⁷ See: *Lev.* 14:19.

- **Features:** The animal offered up depended upon who it was in substitution of: if a priest, a *bull* was offered; if a ruler, a *male goat*; if a layperson, a *female goat*, or in the case of the poor, a *turtledove or pigeon*. If for the entire congregation, a *bull* was offered.
 - **Examples:** Above all: *Yom Kippur* Sacrifice, i.e., the “Day of Atonement.”⁴⁸⁹ One also thinks of the “suffering servant” who is a messianic sin offering in *Isaiah’s* Servant Songs.⁴⁹⁰
- e. **GUILT OFFERINGS.**⁴⁹¹
- **Terminology:** A reparation offering (Hebrew: *asham*).
 - **Definition:** an “occasional” bloody offering; the animal’s blood was “dashed against the side of the altar.”⁴⁹² It offered atonement for one specific circumstance of “guilt”.
 - **Features:** The worshipper paid a twenty percent tithe to the Temple in reparation, e.g. profanation of a holy thing or “unjust appropriation of personal property.”⁴⁹³
 - **Examples:** Penance for impurity or unwitting sin;⁴⁹⁴ Cleansing of a healed leper;⁴⁹⁵ penance made after restitution of stolen goods.⁴⁹⁶

V. SPOTLIGHT: TEMPLE MUSIC AND TEMPLE WISDOM

1. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE KINGDOM.

- a. David and Solomon stand at the head of a long tradition of temple praise (*The Psalms*) and temple knowledge (Wisdom literature).
- b. The collection of psalms that eventually became the *Psalter*—along with the Old Testament Wisdom tradition—together represents a kind of “constitution of the Davidic covenant.”
- c. The early Davidic kingdom is a time of manifold blessings: a new land, new temple, and above all, God’s promise of an “*everlasting dynasty*.” For God’s people, it is a new faith and optimism, new forms of instruction, and new liturgical music and feasts.

⁴⁸⁸ See: *Lev.* 15:1-33.

⁴⁸⁹ *Lev.* 16:3. In the case of the Day of Atonement liturgy, one male goat was sacrificed on the altar; a second goat (“Azazel”) was sent into the desert in order to “remove” Israel’s sins (see: *Lev.* 16:8, 10, 26).

⁴⁹⁰ *Isa.* 53:12 “Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because *he poured out his soul to death*, and was *numbered with the transgressors*; yet *he bore the sin of many*, and made *intercession for the transgressors*.”

⁴⁹¹ See: *Lev.* 5:14-6:7; 7:1-7.

⁴⁹² *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, 793.

⁴⁹³ *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, 793.

⁴⁹⁴ See: *Lev.* 5:14.

⁴⁹⁵ See: *Lev.* 14.

⁴⁹⁶ See: *Lev.* 6:1-17.

2. BEYOND THE LAW OF MOSES: THE SONGBOOK OF THE TEMPLE.

- a. **DAVIDIC SPIRITUALITY.** “One thing is certain: the Psalter is permeated with a Davidic spirituality. Its prayers reflect the particular terms of the covenant God made with the house of David.”⁴⁹⁷
- b. For the psalmist, life is senseless aside from *worship*:
 - “But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, *until I went into the sanctuary of God ...*”⁴⁹⁸
- c. **St. Hippolytus:** “The book of Psalms contains new doctrine after the law of Moses. And after the writing of Moses, it is the second book of doctrine ... [David] introduces the new hymn and a new style of jubilant praise in the worship of God ... [David] teaches many other things beyond the law of Moses.”⁴⁹⁹
- d. **A GLIMPSE OF ANCIENT JEWISH LITURGY.** “The *Psalms* were *the songbook of the temple*, and in them we glimpse something of the ancient [Jewish] liturgy.”⁵⁰⁰
 - The Lord “dwells in Zion,”⁵⁰¹ on His “holy hill.”⁵⁰²
 - The *Psalms* make clear that the Temple is the dwelling place of God’s glory.⁵⁰³
 - **Ratzinger:** “The importance of music in biblical religion is shown very simply by the fact that the verb ‘to sing’ (with related words such as ‘song’, and so forth) is one of the most commonly used words in the Bible. It occurs 309 times in the Old Testament and thirty-six in the New. When man comes into contact with God, mere speech is not enough. Areas of his existence are awakened that spontaneously turn into song. Indeed, man’s own being is insufficient for what he has to express, and so he invites the whole of creation to become a song with him: ‘Awake, my soul! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn! I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to you among the nations. For your steadfast love is great to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds’ (*Psa. 57:8f.*)”⁵⁰⁴
- e. **A NEW SONG.** In the *Psalms*, we see that God has put a “*new song*” in the mouth of Israel:
 - “O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth!”⁵⁰⁵
 - “O sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!”⁵⁰⁶

⁴⁹⁷ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 15

⁴⁹⁸ *Psa. 73:16–17.*

⁴⁹⁹ Cited in: Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 15.

⁵⁰⁰ Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*, 137.

⁵⁰¹ *Psa. 9:11* “Sing praises to the LORD, *who dwells in Zion!*”

⁵⁰² *Psa. 43:3* “Oh send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, *let them bring me to thy holy hill and to thy dwelling!*”

⁵⁰³ *Psa. 26:8* “O LORD, I love the habitation of thy house, and *the place where thy glory dwells ...*”

⁵⁰⁴ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 136 (emphasis added).

⁵⁰⁵ *Psa. 96:1.*

3. **THE LAW INTERNALIZED.** The *Psalms* reflect God's fresh idea, that now, Torah must be "*written on the hearts*" of all Israel.⁵⁰⁷ Here, we see a move "*beyond Sinai*" towards a coming fulfillment of the earlier Deuteronomic covenant. But to actualize the promises, Israel must now *internalize* the Torah, so that "*each Israelite*" embodies the kingdom of God.
 - "In the building of the Temple of Solomon, the son of David, we see a further fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant. The place where Abraham offered Isaac is Mount Moriah, *the same mountain range where the later Temple stands*. Instead of offering Isaac, Abraham offered a ram as a substitute sacrifice. It was there that God promised to bless all nations. Hence, the Temple cult is a reminder to God of the covenant oath He swore *to save all mankind*."⁵⁰⁸
4. **FROM SINAI TO ZION: THE LAW UNIVERSALIZED.** Similarly, the Wisdom tradition similarly has a *universalizing* tendency: As this "new kingdom" grows *in Israel* (more deeply, personally) and *beyond Israel*, *Psalms* and OT Wisdom reflect the bold, new reach of the covenantal story, approaching its fulfillment.
 - "There is a clear movement *from Sinai to Zion* represented by the Davidic covenant. Sinai represents the Mosaic tradition, a *national covenant*, especially linked with *ceremonial laws*. Zion, however, represents an *international arrangement*."⁵⁰⁹
5. **Temple Wisdom: A Law for All the Nations**
 - a. "The Davidic covenant completes the international vision that the lower law of Deuteronomy was meant to achieve through Israel. Hence through the Davidic covenant, *God brings His law to the nations, not through an exclusive Israelite law code [as at Sinai], but through the universality of the Wisdom literature*."⁵¹⁰
 - b. **THE AVAILABILITY OF WISDOM.**
 - **Prov. 1:20-21** "*Wisdom cries aloud in the street; in the markets she raises her voice; on the top of the walls she cries out; at the entrance of the city gates she speaks.*"
 - **John 18:20** "Jesus answered him, 'I have spoken openly to the world ... I have said nothing secretly.'"
 - **John 12:46-47** "I have come as light into the world, *that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness*. If anyone hears my sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; *for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world*."⁵¹¹
 - c. **TO ALL WHO DESIRE HER...**

⁵⁰⁶ *Psa.* 98:1.

⁵⁰⁷ *Jer.* 31:33.

⁵⁰⁸ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 68 (emphases added).

⁵⁰⁹ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 67 (emphasis added).

⁵¹⁰ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 74 (emphasis added).

⁵¹¹ See: *John* 3:16-17 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him."

- **Sir. 24:19-21** “Come to me, you who desire me, and eat your fill of my produce. For the remembrance of me is sweeter than honey, and my inheritance sweeter than the honeycomb. Those who eat me will hunger for more, and those who drink me will thirst for more.”
 - **Matt. 11:28-30** “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
- d. **The Righteousness Triumph Through Wisdom.** “The Wisdom literature reflects the *international quality of the Davidic covenant*” not concerned with the ritual laws of Sinai to Israel alone, but to “*anyone who seeks righteousness.*”⁵¹²
- **Wisd. 1:1** “Love righteousness, you rulers of the earth, think of the Lord with uprightness ...”
 - **Wisd. 3:1** “But *the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God*, and no torment will ever touch them.”
 - **Prov. 4:18-19** “But *the path of the righteous* is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day. *The way of the wicked* is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.”
 - **Eccles. 3:17** “God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for he has appointed a time for every matter, and for every work.”
 - “... Zion represents both the reunification of Israel and [the reunification] of all the nations. Zion represents the great accomplishment of the Davidic rule—a Pan-Israelite kingdom that includes all the nations.”⁵¹³
6. **WISDOM HAS ACCESS TO ALL THE WORLD, YET ‘TABERNACLES’ IN ZION.**
- a. Despite the ‘*universalizing*’ pattern in the temple wisdom of Davidic covenant, the uniqueness of God’s relationship with Israel and “primacy” of Zion is clearly evident in the Wisdom literature.
 - b. For example, in *Sirach*, Lady Wisdom has “royal access” to all the world:
 - **Sir. 24: 3:4** “I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, *and covered the earth like a mist*. I dwelt in high places, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.”
 - **Sir. 24:6-7** “In the waves of the sea, in the whole earth, and in every people and nation I have gotten a possession. Among all these I sought a resting place; I sought in whose territory I might lodge.”
 - c. Nevertheless, it is in Jerusalem / Zion that Wisdom “finds her resting place”—and it is precisely there that she “tabernacles” in God’s holy Temple:
 - **Sir. 24:8-11** “Then the Creator of all things gave me a commandment, and the one who created me assigned a place for my tent [Greek Old Testament (LXX): *skene*]. And he said, ‘Make your *tabernacle*’⁵¹⁴ in Jacob,

⁵¹² Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 72 (emphasis added).

⁵¹³ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 70 (emphasis added).

⁵¹⁴ The book of *Sirach* was originally composed in Hebrew but translated into Greek a generation later by the grandson of the author (see: Prologue, *Sirach*). The term in the Greek Old Testament (LXX) for “*tabernacle*” is *skene*. Strikingly, it shares the same root as the verb “*to dwell / tabernacle*” in *John* 1:14 “And the Word became flesh and *dwelt* [Greek: *skeneoō*] among us.” In Hebrew, the corresponding term for “*tabernacle*” is

and in Israel receive your inheritance.’ From eternity, in the beginning, he created me, and for eternity I shall not cease to exist. In the holy *tabernacle* [Greek Old Testament (LXX): *skene*] I ministered before him, and so I was *established in Zion*. In the beloved city likewise he gave me a resting place, and in Jerusalem was my dominion.”

- **John 1:14a** “And the Word became flesh and *tabernacled* among us ...”⁵¹⁵

7. THE GLORY OF LADY WISDOM.

- a. Lady Wisdom (Greek: *sophia*) is the “*personification*” of *His own glory* in the Wisdom literature. She is so closely linked with God’s glory that one cannot easily discriminate between Sophia’s glory and the glory of the Almighty:
 - **Wisd. 9:10-12** “Send her forth from the holy heavens, and *from the throne of thy glory send her*, that she may be with me and toil, and *that I may learn what is pleasing to thee*. For she knows and understands all things, and *she will guide me wisely in my actions and guard me with her glory.*”
 - **Wisd. 7:25-26** “For she is a breath of the power of God, and *a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty*; therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her. For she is *a reflection of eternal light*, a *spotless mirror* of the working of God, and an *image of his goodness.*”
 - **Wisd. 7:29-30** “For she is more beautiful than the sun, and excels every constellation of the stars. Compared with the light she is found to be superior, for it is succeeded by the night, but against wisdom evil does not prevail.”⁵¹⁶
 - **Sir. 24:1-2** “Wisdom will praise herself, and *will glory in the midst of her people*. In the assembly of the Most High she will open her mouth, and *in the presence of his host she will glory ...*”
 - **Sir. 51:16-17** “I inclined my ear a little and received her, and I found for myself much instruction. I made progress therein; *to him who gives wisdom I will give glory.*”

8. CONCLUSION: FROM ADAM TO DAVID.

a. THE PSALMS: THE INTERNALIZATION OF SINAI

- “The Psalter is permeated with a Davidic spirituality. Its prayers reflect the particular terms of the covenant God made with the house of David.”⁵¹⁷
- “*Psalm 89* confirms that David represents a kind of embodiment of Israel. David is called ‘God’s first-born,’⁵¹⁸ much like Israel in Exodus 4:22.⁵¹⁹

mishkan. It will be recalled that the *mishkan* is directly related to the verb *shakan* (“to dwell”), especially as in God’s glory cloud that “dwelt” or “abode” upon the tabernacle. The point: there was a “family” of Hebrew terms, and corresponding Greek terms, which were often used in the Old Testament with respect to God’s glory, the tabernacle, dwelling place. This terminology was seized upon by the Evangelist, to make the point that whereas in the Old Covenant, the Law / Wisdom was the “place” where God’s glory “tabernacled,” now in the New Covenant, that “place” is the Logos / Jesus.

⁵¹⁵ In a future chapter, more will be said about the fascinating literary and theological parallel between *Sir.* 24:8-11 and *John* 1:14.

⁵¹⁶ Compare with *John* 1:5 “The light shines in the darkness, and *the darkness has not overcome it.*”

⁵¹⁷ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 15

- *Catechism*: “In the Psalms David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the first prophet of Jewish and Christian prayer. The prayer of Christ, the true Messiah and Son of David, will reveal and fulfill the meaning of this prayer.”⁵²⁰
- b. **The Wisdom Literature: God’s Universal Law**
- “The Wisdom literature reflects the international quality of the Davidic covenant ... to “anyone who seeks righteousness.”⁵²¹
 - “Adam failed to satisfy the requirements of the covenant because *he failed to offer his life as a priestly sacrifice to God in the garden*. His *fear of death* prevented him from loving God more than his own life ... The hope for the restoration of the kingdom of David with the nations on Mount Zion is exactly what the New Testament writers understood Christ as fulfilling.”⁵²²
 - “The truth that Adam failed to realize is *finally understood* by the Davidic king. If the Mosaic Torah, which was meant to make Israel a light to the nations, is identified with Sinai, the Wisdom literature [is] identified as the *Torah of the Davidic covenant that comes forth from Zion*.”⁵²³

⁵¹⁸ *Psa.* 89:27 “And I will make [David] the first-born, the highest of the kings of the earth.”

⁵¹⁹ *Exod.* 4:22 “And you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, *Israel is my first-born son ...*’”

⁵²⁰ CCC #2579. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 620.

⁵²¹ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 72 (emphasis added).

⁵²² Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 137, 143 respectively (emphasis added).

⁵²³ Barber, *Singing in the Reign*, 75 (emphasis added).

THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD (I/II)

PART I: THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

“The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ‘Stand in the gate of the LORD’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all you men of Judah who enter these gates to worship the LORD.’ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Amend your ways and your doings, and I will let you dwell in this place. Do not trust in these deceptive words: *‘This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.’*”

JEREMIAH 7:1-4

I. THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

1. SOLOMON’S GREAT WISDOM—AND HIS WEALTH BECAME WORLD-RENOWN.

- **I Ki. 4:29-34** “And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and largeness of mind like the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all other men, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite (etc.); and his fame was in all the nations round about. He also uttered three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five. ... *And men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom.*”
- **Catechism:** “The Temple of Jerusalem, the house of prayer that David wanted to build, will be the work of his son, Solomon. The prayer at the dedication of the Temple relies on God’s promise and covenant, on the active presence of his name among his People, recalling his mighty deeds at the Exodus.⁵²⁴ The king lifts his hands toward heaven and begs the Lord, *on his own behalf, on behalf of the entire people, and of the generations yet to come, for the forgiveness of their sins and for their daily needs, so that the nations may know that He is the only God and that the heart of his people may belong wholly and entirely to him.*”⁵²⁵

2. **PRAYING FOR WISDOM.** According to *I Kings*, when God appeared to the new king in a dream and granted him one request, Solomon prayed for wisdom.⁵²⁶ Indeed, Solomon’s wisdom was so celebrated that he became the figure most associated with the wisdom tradition of ancient Judaism.

3. **SACRED SCRIPTURE.** Attributed to him are two large sections *Proverbs*,⁵²⁷ *Song of Songs*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Psa. 127*, *Wisdom of Solomon* – as well as apocryphal texts, such as *Psalms of Solomon* and *Odes of Solomon*. Jesus himself mentions Solomon, by way of contrast:

⁵²⁴ See: *I Ki.* 8:10–61.

⁵²⁵ CCC #2580. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 620.

⁵²⁶ See: *I Ki.* 3:5–15.

⁵²⁷ *Prov.* 10:1–22:16; 25:1–29:27.

- **Matt. 12:42** “The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear *the wisdom of Solomon*, and behold *something greater than Solomon is here*.”

II. THE FOLLY OF SOLOMON

1. Prior to the start of Solomon’s rule, and as David grew old, two factions fought for succession to his throne.
 - a. One on side was David’s eldest living son Adonijah, helped by David’s general Joab and high priest Abiathar.⁵²⁸
 - b. On the other side was Solomon, supported by included Bathsheba, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah (captain of David’s bodyguard), and Zadok the priest. This latter group found favor with David, and even as Adonijah and his group were *celebrating victory* – Solomon was proclaimed David’s co-regent and successor.⁵²⁹
2. As new ruler, Solomon divided all of the territory except for Judah into twelve districts, ignoring the old tribal allotments, and centralized power in Jerusalem. Each district was responsible for supporting his government and the Temple for one month of the year.⁵³⁰
3. Solomon used foreigners, many of them captives, as forced labor in his extensive building projects. Eventually this levy included Israelites.⁵³¹ In the eleventh year of his reign, after seven years of building (950 B.C.), he completed and dedicated the Temple.⁵³²
4. By all accounts, the “first temple” was glorious, comprised of the finest gold, mahogany from the sea-faring Phoenicians, cedars from Lebanon, and other exquisite materials. He added to it his own his own magnificent palace.⁵³³
5. Solomon’s ships sailed to the end of the known world, a three year journey.⁵³⁴ From these expeditions, he acquired gold and other treasures. He brokered a number of treaties with neighboring states, such as that with Hiram of Tyre.⁵³⁵
6. Many of these negotiations were cemented by marriage (and / or as concubines). He even married the daughter of the Egyptian pharaoh, an indication of the greed of his kingdom:
 - **I Ki. 3:1** “Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt; he took Pharaoh’s daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had finished building his own house and the house of the LORD and the wall around Jerusalem”
 - **I Ki. 11:1-2.** “This Solomon did despite the command of God not to do so.”

⁵²⁸ See: *I Ki.* 1:5–10.

⁵²⁹ See: *I Ki.* 1:11–49.

⁵³⁰ See: *I Ki.* 4:7–28; 5:1–8

⁵³¹ See: *I Ki.* 5:13–18, 27–32.

⁵³² See: *I Ki.* 6:38.

⁵³³ See: *I Ki.* 7:1–8.

⁵³⁴ See: *I Ki.* 9:26–28; 10:22.

⁵³⁵ See: *I Ki.* 5:1–12; 15–26.

7. These many foreign entanglements *led Solomon away from the pure worship of the God of Israel*,⁵³⁶ for which is blamed the division of Solomon's kingdom after his death:
 - **I Ki. 11:9-13** "Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. *Yet for the sake of David your father* I will not do it in your days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However I will not tear away all the kingdom; *but I will give one tribe to your son*, for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."
8. While the overall assessment of the books of *Kings* (and especially *Chronicles*) is positive with regard to Solomon, the later book of *Sirach* sharply critiques Solomon for the loss of the united Kingdom:
 - **Sir. 47:19** "But you laid your loins beside women, and through your body you were brought into subjection. You put stain upon your honor, and defiled your posterity, so that you brought wrath upon your children and they were grieved at your folly, *so that the sovereignty was divided and a disobedient kingdom arose out of Ephraim.*"
9. Above all, *Sirach* indicts Solomon for the "division" of David's kingdom.⁵³⁷ He does this in several ways. First, it describes the Northern Kingdom, whose capital was Ephraim, as a "*disobedient kingdom.*"⁵³⁸
10. Secondly, although the blame is squarely laid at Solomon's feet (as well as his son, Rehoboam), *Sirach* emphasizes that the everlasting kingdom promised to David⁵³⁹ remained in full effect, and that there will be a "remnant" of faithful ones. From this lineage, according to *Sirach*, would eventually come the messiah:
 - **Sir. 47:19-22** "But the Lord will never give up his mercy, nor cause any of his works to perish; *he will never blot out the descendants of his chosen one*, nor destroy the posterity of him who loved him; *so he gave a remnant to Jacob, and to David a root of his stock.*"

III. THE REIGN OF REHEBOAM, THE DIVISION OF DAVID'S KINGDOM AND THE FALL OF THE TEMPLE.

1. **REHEBOAM.** *Reheboam*⁵⁴⁰ was the son of Solomon and his successor as king. He reigned as first king of Judah (922–915 B.C.) after the division of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah).
 - a. He is listed among the ancestors of Jesus (*Matt.* 1:7). He was just forty-one years old when he began to reign over Judah after the death of Solomon (*I Ki.* 14:21). He was initially to become king of all Israel.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁶ See: *I Ki.* 11:1–8.

⁵³⁷ The author of *Sirach* shows its allegiance to the Southern Kingdom of Judah, to which belonged the promises of the Davidic covenant.

⁵³⁸ *Sir.* 47:21.

⁵³⁹ See: *II Sam.* 7:12–13.

⁵⁴⁰ Hebrew: "The people are numerous."

⁵⁴¹ *I Ki.* 12:1 "Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem *to make him king.*"

- b. Yet, because he refused to reduce the burden of forced labor that Solomon had imposed, the northern tribes revolted (below).
2. In his place, the representatives of the northern tribes proclaimed a man named Jeroboam as “king of Israel.”
3. Only Judah and (and the tribe of Benjamin) supported Solomon’s son Rehoboam, the rightful king. As a result of the uprising, Rehoboam fled to Jerusalem. *I Kings* records this, and remarks that the northern tribes (i.e. “Israel”) was in rebellion against “the house of David” (i.e. the Davidic / Judean kings).⁵⁴²
4. The text adds that “There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.”⁵⁴³
5. Theologically, the division of the kingdom was viewed as God’s response to Solomon’s idolatry; fulfilling what had been spoken earlier through the prophets.⁵⁴⁴
6. The faithful priests and the Levites in the north came south to live in Judah, yet Rehoboam himself was faithful to God for only the first three years of his reign.⁵⁴⁵ Afterward, he and many in Judah engaged in idolatry, constructing “high places” (pagan alters).
7. In response, God punished Rehoboam by sending the Egyptian pharaoh Shishak, who took the Temple treasures of Jerusalem, and by causing continuous conflicts between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.⁵⁴⁶

IV. THE RISE OF THE NORTH: JEROBOAM

1. **JEROBOAM.** The first king of the northern kingdom was Jeroboam⁵⁴⁷ (922–901 B.C.). As a young man, he led a revolt against Solomon.⁵⁴⁸
 - **I Ki 14:30** “And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.”
 - a. Originally an officer on the Solomon’s building projects, he was made head of forced labor because of his abilities.⁵⁴⁹
 - b. Such forced labor had long irritated many in Israel.⁵⁵⁰ The prophet Ahijah fanned such discontent into open revolt,⁵⁵¹ and promised kingship to Jeroboam.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴² *I Ki* 12:18-20 “And King Rehoboam made haste to mount his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. *So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.* And when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel.”

⁵⁴³ *I Ki*. 12:21.

⁵⁴⁴ *I Ki*. 12:15 “So the king did not hearken to the people; for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the Lord that he might fulfill his word, which the Lord spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.”

⁵⁴⁵ See: *II Chron.* 11:13–17.

⁵⁴⁶ *II Chron.* 12:1-4 “When the rule of Rehoboam was established and was strong, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him. In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, because they had been unfaithful to the Lord, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem with twelve hundred chariots and sixty thousand horsemen. And the people were without number who came with him from Egypt—Libyans, Sukki-im, and Ethiopians. And he took the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem.”

⁵⁴⁷ Hebrew: “*may the people multiply.*”

⁵⁴⁸ *I Ki*. 12:21 “When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, and the tribe of Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand chosen warriors, *to fight against* the house of Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.”

⁵⁴⁹ See: *I Ki*. 11:27–28.

2. Following this, Jeroboam escaped Solomon’s wrath by fleeing to Egypt.
 - **I Ki. 11:40** “*Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam; but Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.*”
3. After learning that Rehoboam went to Shechem to be confirmed as successor to Solomon’s throne, Jeroboam returned from Egypt.⁵⁵³ Meanwhile, Rehoboam foolishly rejected the northern tribes’ request to lighten their burdens,⁵⁵⁴ and vowed to add to their burdens:
 - **I Ki. 12:11** “Whereas my father laid upon you a heavy yoke, *I will add to your yoke. My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.*”
4. Naturally, northern Israel rejected his rule, thus ending the dual monarchy.⁵⁵⁵ Instead, they acclaimed Jeroboam as king over the ten tribes:
 - **I Ki. 12:20** “And when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. *There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.*”
5. **GOLDEN CALVES—PART TWO.** Jeroboam made Shechem his first capital, fortifying it. His reign was marked by continual warfare with Judah.⁵⁵⁶ Afraid that *the Temple worship in Jerusalem* would erode his support, Jeroboam erected *golden calves at Bethel and Dan* for Israel’s worship;⁵⁵⁷ the calves were soon enmeshed in a syncretistic blend with *Baal-ism*, the symbol of which was the bull.
6. Jeroboam appointed new priests representing all strata of society *except* the Levites.⁵⁵⁸ On occasion he himself officiated at the sacrifices.⁵⁵⁹ He reorganized the cultic calendar, moving the date of the Feast of Booths, etc.
7. Such innovations drew the ire of the orthodox, and came to typify “*the sins of Jeroboam*”⁵⁶⁰ and eventually led to Israel’s fall to the Assyrians in 722 B.C.
 - **II Ki. 17:21-23** “When he had torn Israel from the house of David they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. And Jeroboam drove Israel from following the

⁵⁵⁰ See: *Deut.* 26:6–7.

⁵⁵¹ See: *I Ki.* 11:29–39.

⁵⁵² *I Ki.* 11:30–32, 34–35 “Then Ahijah laid hold of the new garment that was on [Jeroboam], and *tore it into twelve pieces.* And he said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon, and will give you ten tribes (but he shall have one tribe, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel) … Nevertheless I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand; but I will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of David my servant whom I chose, who kept my commandments and my statutes; but I will take the kingdom out of his son’s hand, and will give it to you, ten tribes.’”

⁵⁵³ See: *I Ki.* 12:1–2.

⁵⁵⁴ See: *I Ki.* 12:3.

⁵⁵⁵ See: *I Ki.* 12:4–19.

⁵⁵⁶ See: *I Ki.* 14:19, 30; 15:6–7; *II Chron.* 12:15.

⁵⁵⁷ See: *I Ki.* 12:26–30.

⁵⁵⁸ See: *II Ki.* 12:31.

⁵⁵⁹ See: *II Ki.* 12:32–33.

⁵⁶⁰ See: *I Ki.* 15:30, 34; 16:26, 31.

LORD and made them commit great sin. The people of Israel walked in all the sins which Jeroboam did; they did not depart from them, until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had spoken by all his servants the prophets. *So Israel was exiled from their own land to Assyria until this day.*”

8. Indeed, Jeroboam persisted in this apostasy despite repeated warnings; neither “oracles of doom,”⁵⁶¹ nor the word of the old prophet Ahijah, nor even the death of his own son⁵⁶² made Jeroboam repent.⁵⁶³
9. His obstinacy became the sin of his house and ended with its destruction:
 - **II Ki. 15:29** “[The] *King of Assyria* came and captured ... Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; *and he carried the people captive to Assyria.*”
10. In the early 700’s, Assyria, under Tiglath-pilser began to conquer the Israelites. In 722 B.C., the battle was lost by the Israelites.⁵⁶⁴

V. THE ASSYRIAN INVASION

1. Continued idolatry would bring severe judgments upon both “idolatrous” nations: In **722 B.C.**—a very key date—the Assyrians invaded northern Israel, plundering Ephraim and deporting many Israelites. This is known as the Assyrian invasion.⁵⁶⁵
2. Although the Assyrians attempted to seize Jerusalem, Judah’s King Hezekiah fortified the walls of Jerusalem. He constructed a secret tunnel, which brought fresh water from the Gihon spring into the walls of the city, and spared Jerusalem from destruction.⁵⁶⁶
3. Meanwhile, the Jewish inhabitants of the north were deported, and forced to intermarry. The people that eventually re-settled in this region became known as **Samaritans**—half-Israelite, half “pagan” in ancestry. In reality, they were the “lost tribes of Israel.”
 - a. Indeed, they were alienated from Judah—and theologically, this meant that they were “cut off” from the Davidic promises, *of land, temple and covenant.*
 - b. The Samaritans re-wrote the Pentateuch, editing it in keeping with the northern mindset.
 - c. They established their own Temple on Mt. Gerizim.
 - d. They remained cut off from the “house of David” throughout the rest of Israel’s history.

⁵⁶¹ Spoken by an unknown Judean prophet—see: *I Ki.* 13:1–10.

⁵⁶² See: *I Ki.* 14:1–18.

⁵⁶³ See: *I Ki.* 13:33.

⁵⁶⁴ *II Ki.* 15:29 “In the days of Pekah king of Israel Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came and captured Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Jan-oah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; *and he carried the people captive to Assyria.*”

⁵⁶⁵ See: *II Ki.* 15.

⁵⁶⁶ *II Ki.* 20:20 “The rest of the deeds of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?” Those who visit Jerusalem today can walk through the 1,800’ underground tunnel [i.e. “conduit”], which Hezekiah’s men dug through the rock. It was a spectacular feat—especially given the time period! The purpose of the tunnel was to provide fresh drinking water, from the Gihon spring—outside the city’s walls, to be brought into the city, thereby assuring their water supply while under siege. It worked, and the Assyrians retreated.”

- e. From all of this, anger and resentment continued between Jews and Samaritans, generation after generation—and in the eyes of the Judeans, the Samaritans had *cut themselves off* from the Davidic promises.
- f. Jesus' encounter of the Samaritan women at the well (*John 4*) should be read as his desire to bring salvation to “all Israel”—and to restore the *lost tribes of Israel*—and all wayward Israelites from exile.

VI. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE—AND EXILE

1. Later, in **587 B.C.**—another crucial date—came the final blow to the Kingdom of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah, captured Jerusalem ... and completely destroyed Solomon's Temple.
2. This was a most important and cataclysmic event in the long history of Israel, and its importance cannot be emphasized enough:
 - **II Ki. 25:1, 6-10, 21b** “And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and laid siege to it; and they built siege works against it round about ... Then they captured the king [Zedekiah – the last Judean king], and brought him up to the king of Babylon ... who passed sentence upon him. *They slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and took him to Babylon.* In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Neb-uzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. *And he burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down.* And all the army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke down the walls around Jerusalem ... *So Judah was taken into exile out of its land.*”
3. **LIFE IN EXILE: BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON**
 - **Psa. 137:1-6** “*By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion.* On the willows there we hung up our lyres. For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, ‘Sing us one of the songs of Zion!’ How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither! Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy!”
4. **QUESTIONS ABOUND.** This was a remarkable tragedy for Israel, and it led to many lingering questions:
 - *How could God allow this to happen?*
 - *What did it all mean?*
 - *Where was our God in our hour of need—and why did His glorious presence leave the Temple?*
 - *Would He return?*
 - *Would He have us rebuild the Temple? When? How?*
 - *Would He restore the Temple? Restore our fortunes? Restore us to the Land?*

5. THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

- a. **Ratzinger:** “The prophets who followed Moses were the great witnesses to the impermanence of all these customs. Raising their voices, they pushed history forward toward the New Moses.”⁵⁶⁷
- b. Understanding the reasons for—and implications of the destruction of Solomon’s Temple became the primary preoccupation of the prophets of the Old Testament:
- c. The “**pre-exilic prophets**” warned of *what was about to* happen, of the immanence of the Temple’s destruction, due especially to the corruption of Israel’s king—which in turn led many away from the ways of God (e.g. *Amos, First Isaiah*).
 - **Isaiah:** “Let me sing for my beloved a love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dugged it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? *And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.*”⁵⁶⁸
- d. The “**exilic prophets**” sought to make sense of *what was happening* as the “just judgment of God” (e.g. *Jeremiah*) and foresaw a new Temple, functioning in a future age, with the purified people of God (*Ezekiel*).
 - **Ezekiel:** “The word of the Lord came to me: ‘Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, *they defiled it by their ways and their doings*; their conduct before me was like the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity. *So I poured out my wrath upon them* for the blood which they had shed in the land, for the idols with which they had defiled it. I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries; in accordance with their conduct and their deeds I judged them. But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that men said of them, ‘These are the people of the Lord, and yet they had to go out of his land.’ *But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel caused to be profaned among the nations to which they came.*”⁵⁶⁹
- e. The “**post-exilic-prophets**” chastised Israel for what had happened ... and summoned her to repentance for what had happened. They foresaw the ‘Day of the Lord’ (*Zephaniah*) and a coming messiah who would vindicate Israel among her enemies (*Zechariah*).

⁵⁶⁷ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 42.

⁵⁶⁸ *Isa.* 5:1–5. Compare with *Luke* 20:9–18.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ezek.* 36:16–21.

- **Zechariah:** “On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness. ‘And on that day, says the LORD of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more; and also I will remove from the land the prophets and the unclean spirit.’”⁵⁷⁰
6. The capture of Jerusalem led to 40 years of captivity / slavery in Babylon (**587-539 B.C.**) known as the **Babylonian captivity** or simply, “**the exile.**” Many of the most influential, wealthy Jews were deported, along with artisans, etc.
 7. In **539 B.C.**, as the subsequent Persian empire overtook the Babylonians, they gained control of the region, and King Cyrus of Persia decreed that the Jewish people could return to their land, re-settle it, and re-build their Temple (“*Edict of Cyrus*”).
 8. Many Jews *did not return*—and never resettled Judea. This is often known as the beginning of the great dispersion (“**Diaspora**”) of the Jewish people, though in truth, it first began during the Assyrian captivity in 722 B.C.⁵⁷¹

⁵⁷⁰ *Zech.* 13:1–2.

⁵⁷¹ By the first century A.D., due to these “forced” dispersions—as well as voluntary migrations, many Jews were now, for the first time, living across the region of the Mediterranean and beyond, in Alexandria, Egypt, in Asia Minor, in Rome, etc. Fascinatingly, from a Christian perspective, this Diaspora assured that the missionary journeys of St. Paul and other Christian preachers had an “immediate” audience of Jewish hearers, in the synagogues and communities of these cities and regions.

THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD (II/II)

PART II: JUDAISM IN THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD

“And also let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that is in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and brought back to the temple which is in Jerusalem, each to its place; you shall put them in the house of God.”

E Z R A 6 : 5 - 6

I. RETURN AND RESTORATION: SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM

1. In light of the **Edict of Cyrus**, a remnant of fervent and faithful Jews did return.
2. Under the leadership of the prophet **Nehemiah** the walls of Jerusalem were repaired.
 - **Ratzinger**: “The Exile came as a challenging opportunity to formulate clearly a positive doctrine about worship and the new thing that was to come. There was no Temple any more, no public and communal form of divine worship as decreed in the law. Deprived as she was of worship, Israel was bound to feel immeasurably poor and pathetic. She stood before God with empty hands. There was no expiation any more, no ‘*holocausts*’ ascending to God. In this crisis the conviction became ever clearer that Israel’s sufferings, through God and for God, the cry of her broken heart, her persistent pleading before the silent God, had to count in his sight as “fatted sacrifices” and whole burnt offerings. It was the very emptiness of Israel’s hands, the heaviness of her heart, that was now to be worship, to serve as a spiritual equivalent of the missing Temple oblations.”⁵⁷²
3. The great scribe and priest Ezra proclaimed the word of God publically, and in many ways, a reform and revival of Judaism had begun.
4. It was hoped that a “prince of Judea,” *Zerubbabel*,⁵⁷³ would emerge as a new Davidic king, but these hopes were quickly dashed.
5. Meanwhile, construction of the Second Temple—sometimes called the “Temple of Zerubbabel” was begun. It was not as glorious as Solomon’s, was completed and it was dedicated in **518 B.C.**
6. This was a time of great oppression—as the Jewish people lived under the rule of one Gentile power after another: the **Babylonians**, followed by the **Persians**, and then the **Greeks**, and finally the **Romans**.
 - 587-539 B.C. = Babylonian rule;
 - 539-323 B.C. = Persian rule;

⁵⁷² Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 45.

⁵⁷³ *Ezra* 2:2 “They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Re-el-aiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.” See also: *Sir.* 49:11 “How shall we magnify Zerubbabel? He was like a signet on the right hand ... in their days *they built the house and raised a temple holy to the Lord, prepared for everlasting glory.*”

- **323-167 B.C. Hellenistic rule** (Alexander the Great, followed by his successors, i.e. the Ptolemies / Selucids)
 - **66 B.C.-70 A.D. (and beyond) = Roman rule**
7. All of this brought to the Jewish people fear, violence, strife, heavy taxation, and much uncertainty.
 8. Even though their Temple was rebuilt, and daily sacrifices continued, some Jews speculated that God was not present in His sanctuary. Even the Ark itself was absent, never to be re-claimed physically.

II. SPOTLIGHT: THE CORRUPTION OF THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD

1. **SELF-RULE.** Only for one brief hundred year period was there “self-rule” for the Jews of the Second Temple period—just after the period of the Maccabean revolt (167-66 A.D.) Specifically, the period of self-rule was from 152-37 B.C.
 - a. Prior to this period, they were ruled by the Babylonians, Persians and Greeks—respectively.
 - b. After this period, they were ruled by the Romans.⁵⁷⁴
 - c. Yet this period of self-rule was itself filled with violence and corruption.
2. **THE LINE OF ZADOK.** From the time of the reign of Solomon (970-931 B.C.) until the time just prior to the Maccabean revolt (175 B.C.), the line of the high priesthood was within one Levitical family, the family of “Zadok.”
 - a. Zadok himself was the high priest of David and Solomon.⁵⁷⁵
 - b. Century after century, each subsequent high priest in these years was selected from the “Zadokite” line.⁵⁷⁶
 - c. In fact, *I Chron.* 6:3-15 traces the Zadokite line from Aaron to the exile.⁵⁷⁷
3. **ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES IV.** Yet, strikingly, in 175 B.C, in order to flex his political muscles, Antiochus Epiphanes IV intervened in the process, and chose for himself the high priest—from a non-Zadokite family.⁵⁷⁸
 - a. Antiochus IV broke the continual tradition of *fourteen generations*. As such, the last Jewish high priest chosen by appointment was Onias III (reigned 185-75).
 - b. Antiochus IV replaced him, appointing Jason (a.k.a. “Jesus”) in 175 B.C. To be clear, Jason was a Zadokite—yet he was chosen by the Hellenistic king! Jason vied for this position, promising Antiochus “a considerable sum of money” and in return for his appointment, “implemented many Greek customs into Jerusalem.”⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁴ Technically, Roman rule began in 66 B.C. However, in 37 B.C., Herod usurped the long-standing process of the appointment of the Jewish high priest, the main topic of this section.

⁵⁷⁵ See: *I Chron.* 12:28; also: Josephus, *Antiquities* vii:2: 2.

⁵⁷⁶ See *II Sam.* 8:17; 15:24; *I Ki.* 1:8, etc. See also: Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 183. “There was in the Temple in Jerusalem a kind of archive in which the genealogies of the (high) priesthood were kept” (Jeremias, 214). Also see: Appendix 1: The Line of the Jewish High Priest (below).

⁵⁷⁷ But see Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 182, who suggests that the idea of the Zadokite priesthood going back to Aaron is “erroneous” (note 105).

⁵⁷⁸ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 183.

⁵⁷⁹ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 184.

4. **THE NON-ZADOKITE LINE.** More boldly, in 172 B.C., Antiochus appointed Menelaus, the first *non-Zadokite* high priest, “an unheard of outrage to the religious feelings of the people.”⁵⁸⁰
 - a. Menelaus reigned from 172-162 B.C., and in many ways, it was these early, non-Zadokite high priests, selected by the Greeks, which led to the Maccabean revolt, even more than the “desecration of the Temple by Antiochus IV. Jerusalem’s temple—and her high priesthood had become corrupted.
 - b. Later, Jacim was appointed by the Greek (Syrian) overlords, and ruled from 162-159. He was not the rightful heir, *but at least he was a Zadokite*.
 - c. Onias III—the lawful successor, fled to Egypt, where he was warmly received by a group of diaspora Jews there, who had built an alternative Temple (!) to the one in Jerusalem at Leontopolis.⁵⁸¹
5. **NO HIGH PRIEST.** Following Jacim, there was a period of seven years when there was *no high priest* in Jerusalem (159-152 B.C.)
6. **PRIESTS OF THE HASMONEAN DYNASTY.** After this, and until early in the Roman rule,⁵⁸² the high priest was selected from the (Levitical but) non-Zadokite family of the *Hasmoneans* (a Pharisaical party), from the so-called Hasmonean Dynasty. In these last 115 years (152-37 B.C.), there was not a Zadokite high priest.
7. **HEROD USURPS POWER.** Beginning in 37 B.C., Herod the Great put to death the Hasmonean line. “Herod wallowed in blood. He put to death even the distant relatives of the Hasmonean line, *so that no single male Hasmonean was left alive to be considered as ruler and consequently, high priest.*”⁵⁸³
 - a. Herod effectively ended *the life-long nature of the Jewish high priesthood* altogether ... and appointed and deposed high priests at will.
 - b. **Josephus:** With two exceptions, he chose high priests from “insignificant persons who were merely of priestly descent” to the high priesthood.⁵⁸⁴
 - c. From the early rule of Herod the Great—through the Roman destruction of the Temple, the line of the high priesthood was corrupted and chosen by Israel’s oppressors.

⁵⁸⁰ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 185.

⁵⁸¹ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 185; Josephus, *Jewish War* I.33. Also: www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/9772-leontopolis. Jeremias observes: “The fact that Onias III resolved to *build a temple in a heathen land*, and moreover found priests, Levites, a community and the very considerable resources necessary to pursue his plan, and finally that this rival temple in a heathen land *existed for 243 years*, until its destruction by the romans in AD 73, *all would be completely incomprehensible if we did not know how ingrained in the Jewish race was the awareness that Onias III, as the son of the last rightful Zadokite high priest, Onias II, was the legitimate heir to the high priesthood ...* In the meantime, the storm of religious persecution broke over Israel (167-164 B.C.), with the Maccabean revolt, and in December 164 the *desecrated Temple was re-consecrated*” (p. 186).

⁵⁸² Roman rule of Judea began in 66 B.C.

⁵⁸³ Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 190.

⁵⁸⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities*, XX.247.

III. THE MANY “JUDAISM’S” OF THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD.

1. **MANY JUDAISMS.**⁵⁸⁵ All of this, without question, had a mesmerizing and debilitating effect upon the Jewish people.
 - a. The Jewish people of the *Second Temple period*—which we can roughly date the time of the “Second Temple” from 518 B.C.—70 A.D. experienced the destruction of Solomon’s Temple, and the utter corruption of its high priesthood.
 - b. During this period, many “Judaisms” would emerge. And it is crucial to see that each and every group defined itself and was defined by its “response” to the loss of the Temple and corruption of the priesthood:
2. **PHARISEES.**⁵⁸⁶
 - a. The popular movement of the *Pharisees* was a “holiness” movement, imposing a radical ceremonial purity upon all the people—not just the priestly class, so that “all Israel” would be pleasing to God.⁵⁸⁷
 - b. They saw themselves as a leaven from within. It was a movement of the people, a populist movement, and despite serve aspects, it attracted many.
 - c. Like Jesus, they embraced the Law and the Prophets, and professed hope in the “resurrection.”
 - d. Unlike Jesus, they prescribed many oral laws which became a burden upon many.
3. **SCRIBES.**⁵⁸⁸
 - a. Often thought of as “copyists” of the Law—though in reality they were the legal scholars and interpreters of Torah.
 - b. Most of the scribes were adherents of the Pharisees’ interpretation of the Torah—which is why they were lumped together.
 - c. However, while *most scribes were Pharisees*, certainly *not all Pharisees were scribes*, or even that scholarly.
 - d. Many “ordinary rabbis” were of the Pharisaical party, and were not scholars as such. The scribes were the academic / elite of the Pharisaical movement.
4. **SADDUCEES.**
 - a. The *Sadducees* were a smaller group of priestly elites, who sought to “consolidate” the power of the (corrupt) priestly line.

⁵⁸⁵ On the “plurality” within first century Judaism, see: Lee Levine, *Jewish Sects, Parties and Ideologies in the Second Temple Period* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1978); Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*. Revised and edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Black. 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1973–87); E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE–66 CE*. Rev. ed. (London: SCM Press, 1992).

⁵⁸⁶ On the Pharisees, see: Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 177–22; John Bowker, *Jesus and the Pharisees* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Louis Finkelstein, *The Pharisees: The Sociological Background of Their Faith*, 2 vols., 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1962); Jacob Neusner, *The Rabbinic Traditions About the Pharisees Before 70*, 3 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1971; reissued as South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism, 202–4 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999). “Did the Pharisees Have Oral Law?” in: E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law From Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies* (London: SCM Press, 1990).

⁵⁸⁷ On this point, see especially: E.P. Sanders, “Did the Pharisees Eat Ordinary Food in Purity?” in: *Jewish Law From Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies* (London: SCM Press, 1990), 97–130.

⁵⁸⁸ See: Anthony J. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees in Palestinian Society* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988).

- b. They were the “old guard” of aristocratic, priestly temple authority.
 - c. They were the conservative party, who unlike the Pharisees, held to just the *Five Books of Moses* (Torah) and rejected the prophetic books, and with them, the belief in *angels*, and in *resurrection*.
 - d. The group had elements of fundamentalism within it.
5. **THE SANHEDRIN.**
- a. The *Sanhedrin* was the governmental bod of the Temple, and was comprised of both Pharisees and Sadducees, as well as those of neither party.
 - b. The high priest was its “president” and the chief priests and leading Levites made up much of the body, thus there was priestly / lay representation.
 - c. At the end of the day, it was the current high priest along with former high priest who held most of the power on the Sanhedrin.
 - d. It was the center of Temple power.
6. **ESSENES.**⁵⁸⁹
- a. The *Essenes* were a community of dissatisfied priests—angry at the corruption of the Temple / high priesthood. They withdrew to a sort of proto-monastic life in the Judean desert at **Qumran**.
 - b. Their leader was the “Teacher of Righteousness,” likely a deposed priest of the Zadokite line. They were an apocalyptic community, and expected a final battle between themselves (“*the Sons of Light*”) and corrupt Jews and pagan nations, who would align together against them (“*the Sons of Darkness*”).
 - c. They eagerly awaited a priestly messiah, who would vindicate them and with them, *cleanse the Temple of unrighteousness* and empower their Teacher as the rightful high priest.
 - d. They followed a very strict “community rule,” and composed the **Dead Sea Scrolls**—which were copies of the Old Testament books as well as other non-biblical texts.
 - e. Although there is speculation that **John the Baptist** was at one time a member of this “separatist” movement, there is no definitive evidence to necessitate it.
7. **ZEALOTS.**⁵⁹⁰
- a. Those known as *zealots* were in all actuality a complex web of smaller movements which had one larger aim in common: the violent overthrow of the **Roman** occupation and the political restoration of the Davidic kingdom.
 - b. “They hid daggers in their clothes and used the cover at festival crowds to get at their victims—hence their nickname *Sicarii*, dagger men.”⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁹ The Qumran community of the Essenes and their manuscripts (*Dead Sea Scrolls*) are, in reality, massive topics. For a brief introduction to some of the leading issues and themes, as well as a short history of the Qumran community, see: Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 7th ed. (London: Penguin, 2014), 1-64; James VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).

⁵⁹⁰ See: Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 126-28; Martin Hengel, *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I Until 70 A.D.* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989).

⁵⁹¹ Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 126-27. He notes that the *Sicarii* were distinguished from other nationalistic zealot groups prior to 70 A.D. It remains unclear whether or not Judas’ nickname, “Iscaiot,” is an indication that he belonged to such a group. For discussion of both possibilities, see Skarsuane, 127.

IV. SPOTLIGHT: EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE VISION

1. **A PERFECTED TEMPLE.** Following the destruction of the Temple of Solomon, the prophet Ezekiel—a *priest as well as a prophet*⁵⁹²—had an eschatological, heavenly vision of a “perfected and renewed” temple.⁵⁹³
 - “The purpose of [Ezekiel’s] temple is to provide access to Yahweh, who is the source of life and blessing in a new Eden⁵⁹⁴ ... The renewal of the environment is a further result of the return of Yahweh and the restoration of the temple. The temple is also at the center of the city,⁵⁹⁵ which is called ‘*Yahweh is there*,’⁵⁹⁶ a fitting conclusion to the theme of God’s presence that is so central to the theology of Ezekiel.⁵⁹⁷
2. **ON NOT GOING ASTRAY ...**
 - a. The vision of Ezekiel must be read against the recent destruction of the Second Temple and fall of Jerusalem—along with a fervent hope that God’s glorious presence would return to the Temple.
 - “Some have held that Ezekiel was providing architectural guidance for the postexilic building of the Second Temple, but the information the prophet gave was not sufficient for such a purpose. Instead, these chapters should be understood as a statement of hope for the exiles that looks ahead symbolically to God’s dwelling in the midst of a people restored to holiness and reestablished in their own land.”⁵⁹⁸
 - “Numerous commentators have pointed out that [a literalistic reading of Ezekiel’s vision] would violate the principle of *Hebrews*: the Old Testament sacrifices pointed to Christ’s ‘one for all’ sacrifice ... so that to go back to those sacrifices would indicate the insufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice...”⁵⁹⁹
 - **Catechism:** “In the liturgy of the Church, it is principally his own Paschal mystery that Christ signifies and makes present. During his earthly life Jesus announced his Paschal mystery by his teaching and anticipated it by his actions. When his Hour comes, he lives out the unique event of history which does not pass away: Jesus dies, is buried,

⁵⁹² See: *Ezek.* 1:3.

⁵⁹³ See: *Ezek.* ch. 40–44.

⁵⁹⁴ See *Gen.* 2:10.

⁵⁹⁵ See: *Ezek.* 48:21.

⁵⁹⁶ See: *Ezek.* 48:35.

⁵⁹⁷ P. P. Jenson, “Temple,” ed. Mark J. Boda and Gordon J. McConville, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets* (Downers Grove, IL; Nottingham, England: IVP Academic; Inter-Varsity Press, 2012), 772.

⁵⁹⁸ “Temple,” in *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, 990. Similarly, some today mistakenly await the re-building of the Second Temple according to the pattern established in the book of *Ezekiel*. Certain fundamentalist groups (both Jewish and Christian) interpret the prophet’s vision in a “literalistic” way, such that the re-building of the temple according to *Ezekiel’s* vision is, according to such thinking, a final step in the “coming of the messiah” / the return of Christ. Such interpretations not only distort the message of the prophet, but also, completely miss the way in which the New Testament understands the Incarnation of Jesus Christ as the true and living Temple of God in person. See: *John* 2:19–22.

⁵⁹⁹ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 343.

risers from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father ‘*once for all*.’⁶⁰⁰ *His Paschal mystery is a real event that occurred in our history, but it is unique: all other historical events happen once, and then they pass away, swallowed up in the past.* The Paschal mystery of Christ, by contrast, cannot remain only in the past, because by his death he destroyed death, and all that Christ is—all that he did and suffered for all men—participates in the divine eternity, and so *transcends all times while being made present in them all. The event of the Cross and Resurrection abides and draws everything toward life.*”⁶⁰¹

3. THE END OF THE EXILE—AND A NEW EXODUS.

- a. Thus, while on one hand the prophet’s vision is not to be interpreted literalistically, on the other hand, Ezekiel’s hope is grounded in the firm conviction that God would bring about an end of the exile and a new exodus.
- b. **N.T. Wright** explains:
 - “*Israel’s God, having abandoned Jerusalem and the Temple at the time of the Babylonian exile, would one day return. He would return in person. He would return in glory. He would return to judge and save. He would return to bring about the new Exodus, overthrowing the enemies that had enslaved his people. He would return to establish his glorious, tabernacling presence in their midst. He would return to rule over the whole world. He would come back to be king.*”⁶⁰²
 - “Jesus’ movement was itself a new-exodus movement, a liberation-movement, a *return-from-exile movement* ... To affirm the resurrection was to affirm the fact that Israel’s God was at work in a new way, turning the world upside down ...”⁶⁰³

4. THE DETAILS OF EZEKIEL’S VISION.

- a. The basic inspiration for the layout of Ezekiel’s temple was Solomon’s Temple through there is a number of differences.
- b. In *Ezek. 37*, God promises a future, restored sanctuary in the midst of a “resurrected” people:
 - **Ezek. 37:26–28** “I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, *and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Then the nations will know that I the Lord sanctify Israel, *when my sanctuary is in the midst of them for evermore.*”
- c. This bold declaration serves as the foundation for the prophet’s vision of an entirely new temple in *Ezek. 40–48*.

⁶⁰⁰ See: *Rom. 6:10; Heb. 7:27; 9:12; John 13:1; 17:1.*

⁶⁰¹ CCC #1085. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 282.

⁶⁰² N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 653.

⁶⁰³ N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2003), 427.

- d. The bulk of the prophet’s vision concerns the “measurements” of the temple—and its ceremonial practices, both of which underscore the necessity of the “holiness” of the temple.
- e. Geographically, Ezekiel is brought to a very high mountain,⁶⁰⁴ the antithesis of the “valley of dry bones (*Ezek. 37:1–14*).
- f. Like the tabernacle before it, Ezekiel’s vision of the restored temple has a layer of sacred spaces which symbolize greater holiness.
- g. Ezekiel’s temple has the characteristic *threefold division*⁶⁰⁵—but— it does not correspond to either the original tabernacle or Solomon’s temple. “Square” outer and inner courts⁶⁰⁶ symbolize the perfection of holiness.
- h. In addition, these three layers of “horizontal holiness” are complemented by layers of “vertical holiness”—recalling the “cosmic mountain” temples of Eden, Ararat, Sinai and Zion.⁶⁰⁷
- i. The outer wall of the temple has three massive gates; none lie to the west, as the temple and a mysterious building occupy that side.⁶⁰⁸ The *eastern gate* is where the glory of Yahweh enters the temple. This is striking—especially given our discussion of the “expulsion” of Adam and Eve to the “east of Eden”.⁶⁰⁹
 - **Ezek. 43:1–3** “Afterward he brought me to the gate, *the gate facing east*. And behold, *the glory of the God of Israel came from the east*; and the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with his glory. And the vision I saw was like the vision which I had seen when he came to destroy the city ... *and I fell upon my face*.”
- j. Commenting on this key passage, **St. Jerome** writes:
 - “The earth shone with his glory, which really takes place at the coming of Christ, when the sound of the apostles goes forth on the whole earth and their words to the ends of the earth.”⁶¹⁰
- k. The *east gate remains closed*, indicating the continual presence of Yahweh in His temple.⁶¹¹ This is a dramatic “reversal” of Yahweh’s departure from the Temple before its destruction.⁶¹²

⁶⁰⁴ *Ezek. 40:2*.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ezek. 40:48; 41:1, 4*.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ezek. 40:17–19, 44*.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ezek. 40:6, 34, 49*.

⁶⁰⁸ *Ezek. 41:12*.

⁶⁰⁹ *Gen. 3:24* “He drove out the man; and *at the east of the garden of Eden* he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.”

⁶¹⁰ St. Jerome, *Commentary on Ezekiel* 13.43.1–9.

⁶¹¹ At least some of the early Church fathers took this as a prefigurement of the Virgin Mary: St. Theodoret of Cyr (393–466 A.D.): “It is very likely that these words *refer to the womb of the Virgin*, through which no one enters and from which no one departs other than the only one who is the Lord.”, *Commentary on Ezekiel* 16.44; St. Ambrose (333–397 A.D.) “What is that gate of the sanctuary, that outer gate facing the east and remaining closed? *Is not Mary the gate through whom the Redeemer entered this world?*” (*Letter* 44).

⁶¹² See: *Ezek.* ch. 8–11.

- l. Moreover, it is likely that the prophet **Zechariah**, writing later, draws upon this “eastern” motif in his depiction of God’s coming messiah:
 - **Zech. 14:4-10** “On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives which lies before Jerusalem *on the east*; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two *from east to west* by a very wide valley; so that one half of the Mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward ... *Then the LORD your God will come, and all the holy ones with him.* On that day *living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem*, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea ... *And the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one and his name one.*”
- m. Regarding *the eastern gate*, **St. Gregory the Great** writes:
 - “Each preacher can be understood under the name “gate” because whoever opens for us the door of the heavenly kingdom through his speech is a gate.⁶¹³
- n. Gentiles may not enter the temple⁶¹⁴ and Levites carefully guard the other gates where sacrifices are brought in by all the faithful of Israel.⁶¹⁵ Ezekiel makes no mention of the high priest in the temple vision—but only Zadokite priests offer sacrifices, since they remained faithful to Yahweh.⁶¹⁶

5. **A TEMPLE-CITY.**

- a. **Ezek. 40:2** “[The Lord] set me down *upon a very high mountain*, on which was *a structure like a city* opposite me.”
- b. In commenting on the inaugural vision of the temple in *Ezek. 40* (above), Beale makes an important contribution in observing:
 - “... What was formerly true of the Holy of Holies will one day be true of the entire city of Jerusalem ... the temple is equivalent to the city because the whole city will be filled with God’s presence that was formerly limited to the innermost sanctuary of Israel’s temple.”⁶¹⁷

V. CONCLUSION: AWAITING THE TRUE AND DEFINITIVE DAVID.

1. After the death of *Solomon*, the united kingdom soon dissolved into two distinct and rival kingdoms. The possibility of a re-united kingdom – already unlikely because of civil war – now became unthinkable and unworkable.
2. The *Northern Kingdom* despised the Kingdom of Judah, which it saw as prideful, greedy, and economically and religiously oppressive. The *Southern Kingdom* saw the Northern Kingdom as apostates – those that left the house and promises of David and Judah.
3. Meanwhile, the world empires of *Assyria* and *Babylon* laid siege to the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, respectively. The northern tribes were taken captive to Assyria; dispersed and forced to inter-marry. They eventually re-populated the region, and became known as the *Samaritans*.

⁶¹³ St. Gregory the Great, *Homilies on Ezekiel*, 2.3.2.

⁶¹⁴ *Ezek.* 44:4-8.

⁶¹⁵ *Ezek.* 44:10-14.

⁶¹⁶ *Ezek.* 44:10-16.

⁶¹⁷ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 340.

4. The conquest of Jerusalem and the *destruction of the temple* was the defining moment of the people of Judah, and indeed, of all Israel.
5. After the **exile** ended in Babylon, a number of zealous Jews returned to Judea and *rebuilt the temple*. This was the time of fervent “revival,” the time of *Second Temple Judaism*. Still, many remained in far-away places (the “*Diaspora*”).
6. For the “average Jew,” there were many unanswered questions, especially concerning God’s presence with them in the temple—and holiness of the holy priesthood.
7. Over these centuries, there was a massive *corruption of the high priesthood*, from the holy *Zadokite* family so that in the *Maccabean* era, it was the Greek overlord *Antiochus IV* and his successors who appointed the high priest.
8. Later, and worse still, *Herod the Great* abolished the lifelong nature of the high priesthood. Slaying his enemies of the *Hasmonean* line, he appointed and deposed high priests at will—none of which were from the Zadokite line going back to David and Solomon.
9. Each diverse form of Judaism that emerged – the *Pharisees*, the *Sadducees*, the *Essenes*, etc. saw themselves as the “solution” to the big question: *What is God doing now and how is He intending to save us?*
10. It was into this period of great complexity—mixed with despair and hope, of confusion and confidence, which various prophets and voices are beginning to cry out that God has not abandoned us, and He will be victorious among us! He will vindicate us, and deliver us by His own hand – through the One Who Is to Come ... the *Messiah!*
11. This is this world that *Jesus of Nazareth* steps into. His ministry was, first and foremost, as a Jew and to the Jewish people.
 - He proclaimed that “*salvation is from the Jews*” (*John 4:22*) ... Yet, He presented Himself as the savior of many, “*to all who believed in His name*” (*John 1:12*).
 - His ministry of healing and proclamation of Good News begins with the healing of the wounds experienced by His own people—including the *lost tribes of Israel*.
 - It should strike us that Jesus’ inaugural ministry lie in the old “northern kingdom,” in Galilee, precisely where Isaiah prophesized the Messiah would emerge.⁶¹⁸
 - In fact, much of Jesus’ ministry *can only fully be understood* if we comprehend Him as the faithful and true Israelite, as God’s own Son⁶¹⁹ to God’s own people. He came to unify His people, “*That they may be one, even as you and I are one.*”⁶²⁰ Jesus enters Jerusalem as the Son of David,⁶²¹ as the one who surpasses David, who is the “true” and “definitive David”⁶²²—and as the Savior of the world.

⁶¹⁸ *Isa. 9:1* “But there will be no gloom for her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt *the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali*, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, *Galilee of the nations.*”

⁶¹⁹ See: *Exod. 4:22*.

⁶²⁰ See: *John 17:11*.

⁶²¹ *Matt. 1:1, 20; 9:27; 12:23; 15:52; 20:30-31; 21:9, 15; Mark 10:47-48; 12:35; Luke 3:31; 18:38-39.*

⁶²² Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 255–256. “The tomb containing his corpse is the proof of his not having risen. Yet the psalm text is still true: it applies to *the definitive David*. Indeed, Jesus is revealed

THE TEMPLE AND THE FOUR GOSPELS (I/V)

PART I: THE TEMPLE, THE MESSIAH AND THE KINGDOM

*“Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence —
as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
and that the nations might tremble at your presence!*

From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear,
no eye has seen a God besides you,
who acts for those who wait for him.
You meet him who joyfully works righteousness,
those who remember you in your ways.

*Behold, you were angry, and we sinned;
in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved?
There is no one who calls upon your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities.*

But now, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Be not so terribly angry, O Lord,
and remember not iniquity forever.
Behold, please look, we are all your people.

*Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised you,
has been burned by fire, and all our pleasant places have become ruins.
Will you restrain yourself at these things, O Lord?
Will you keep silent, and afflict us so terribly?*

ISAIAH 64:1-2, 3-4, 5-1 2

I. A WORD OF INTRODUCTION.

1. Over the next four chapters, we will explore various aspects of temple theology in the Four Gospels.
2. In the present chapter, we will examine the relationship between the *messiah*, the *kingdom* and the *temple*.
3. In the following two chapters, we will examine various temple themes in the Synoptic Gospels and in the Gospel of John, respectively.
4. In the fourth and last chapter in the series, we will hone in on the temple themes in the Passion accounts. (In other words, we will not take up temple themes in the

here as the *true David*, precisely because in him this promise is fulfilled: ‘You will not let your Holy One see corruption.’”

Passion accounts in the chapters just prior, but “reserve” them for closer examination in their own chapter.)

II. THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPELS

1. **BEYOND THE LITERAL.** As we shift in our course to the New Testament—and the Four Gospels in particular, we start with an important principle of interpretation. Specifically, we recall the *Four Senses* of Scripture:
 - **Catechism:** “According to an ancient tradition, one can distinguish between two *senses* of Scripture: the literal and the spiritual, the latter being subdivided into the allegorical, moral, and anagogical senses. The profound concordance of the four senses guarantees all its richness to the living reading of Scripture in the Church.”⁶²³
2. Citing St. Thomas, the Catechism goes on to define the *literal* sense as:
 - “The meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation: ‘All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal.’”⁶²⁴
 - a. As to the literal, we would only add, following Thomas, that the “literal” sense is that meaning intended by the author of Scripture.
 - b. In explaining the *spiritual* sense, the Catechism speaks of how the “realities and events” of Scripture can themselves be “signs” that point to deeper realities still.⁶²⁵ Within the *spiritual* sense are three types of spiritual senses: the *allegorical*,⁶²⁶ the *moral*,⁶²⁷ and the *heavenly* (or “anagogical”).⁶²⁸
 - c. According to a medieval expression,
 - “The *Letter* [literal] speaks of deeds; *Allegory* to faith; *The Moral* how to act; *Anagogy* our destiny.”⁶²⁹
3. **ST. BASIL THE GREAT—AND UNWRITTEN MYSTERIES.** St. Basil (330-379 A.D.) spoke of two ways in which dogma was handed down:
 - “Of the dogma and kerygma which are preserved in the Church, we have some from teaching in writing, and the others we have received from the tradition of the apostles, *handed down in a mystery*.”⁶³⁰

⁶²³ CCC# 115. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd Ed. (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 2000), 33.

⁶²⁴ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I, 1, 10, *ad* 1.

⁶²⁵ CCC# 117.

⁶²⁶ CCC# 117: “The *allegorical sense*. We can acquire a more profound understanding of events by recognizing their significance in Christ; thus the crossing of the Red Sea is a sign or type of Christ’s victory and also of Christian Baptism.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33.

⁶²⁷ CCC# 117: “The *moral sense*. The events reported in Scripture ought to lead us to act justly. As St. Paul says, they were written “for our instruction.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33.

⁶²⁸ CCC# 117: “The *anagogical sense* (Greek: *anagoge*, ‘leading’). We can view realities and events in terms of their eternal significance, leading us toward our true homeland: thus the Church on earth is a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33.

⁶²⁹ Latin: *Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria, moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia*. Attributed to: Augustine of Dacia, *Rotulus pugillariorum*, I: ed. A. Walz: Angelicum 6 (1929) 256. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 33.

⁶³⁰ St. Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit*, 66.

4. In other words, there were meanings in Scripture—intended by the authors of the Sacred Page, they were sometimes not obvious. As an example, he mentions the practice of facing east when praying. The written arguments for this custom were less known in Basil’s time, but the oral tradition was prolific. Christians understood that it was *not only* facing Calvary in Jerusalem—but *also*, the paradise of Eden.
5. Basil adds,
 - “A whole day would not be long enough for me to go through *all the unwritten mysteries of the Church.*”⁶³¹
6. **St. Irenaeus—and Recapitulation.** Far earlier than Basil the Great in the east, in the west, St. Irenaeus (early 2nd. century) spoke of how Christ “recapitulated” what had been formerly done by Adam.⁶³²
 - a. On the term “recapitulated,” Jean Cardinal Daniélou clarifies:
 - “Christ both *accomplishes* and *restores* what had been done by Adam. This is the exact meaning of recapitulation.”⁶³³
 - b. As Daniélou explains, the mystery of recapitulation takes us into “biblical typology,” in which a person, place, thing or event from the Old Testament *pre-figures* a person, place, thing or event in the New Testament. (Think of the Bronze Serpent and Christ; or the Ark and Baptism).⁶³⁴
 - c. Yet, in a sense, the mystery of *recapitulation* is a fuller and deeper way in which the Old and New Testament are “connected.” Deeper than typology, in that recapitulations thrusts us into the mysteries of Christ’s life, and helps us see more than “promise / fulfillment.”
 - **Daniélou:** “[Recapitulation is] a new beginning which is a *resumption* of the first, while at the same time it *restores* the broken harmony ... and *surpasses* the original work.”
7. In its discussion of **recapitulation**, the Catechism writes:
 - “Christ’s whole life is a *mystery of recapitulation*. All Jesus did, said, and suffered had for its aim restoring fallen man to his original vocation: When Christ became incarnate and was made man, he *recapitulated in himself the long history of mankind and procured for us a ‘short cut’ to salvation, so that what we had lost in Adam, that is, being in the image and likeness of God, we might recover in Christ Jesus*. For this reason Christ experienced all the stages of life, thereby giving communion with God to all men.”⁶³⁵
 - “It is precisely when we read the New Testament in terms of cultic theology that we see how much it is bound up, in its deepest implications, with the Old. *The New Testament corresponds to the inner drama of the Old*. It is the inner mediation of

⁶³¹ Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit*, 67. See: Margaret Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship* (London: Bloomsbury: 2007), 2.

⁶³² For examples of “recapitulation” in St. Irenaeus, see especially: *Against Heresies*, IV, 14; III:22, 23. The Greek term used by Irenaeus is *anakephalaiosis*.

⁶³³ Jean Daniélou, *From Shadow to Reality. Studies in the Typology of the Fathers* (London: Burns and Oates), 30.

⁶³⁴ Daniélou, *From Shadow to Reality*, 30.

⁶³⁵ CCC# 518. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 130. According to the *Catechism*, the Four Gospels are best approached in light of a *three-fold* mystery, of which “recapitulation” is one. The other two are mysteries are: “*revelation*” and “*redemption*.” (See CCC# 516-518 for details.)

two elements that at first are in conflict with one another and find their unity in the form of Jesus Christ, in his Cross and Resurrection.”⁶³⁶

8. **CONCLUSION:** In our study of the Temple in the Gospels, we want to draw on these above insights:
 - On one hand, we want to begin with the *literal* sense, which is our foundation;
 - Yet, we boldly affirm, with St. Paul, with Basil, Irenaeus, Thomas, Danielou—and our Catechism—that we must go *deeper* than the *literal* meaning alone.
 - As we examine the Four Gospels, and how the Evangelists present Jesus as the “New Temple,” we’ll do well to take with us the spiritual senses, recapitulation, Sacred tradition, and even the “*unwritten mysteries*” of our Church (Basil) in order to plunge into the depths of our topic.

III. THE TEMPLE, THE MESSIAH, AND THE KINGDOM

1. In the remainder of this chapter, we simply want to examine selected passages from the Four Gospel that relate to the Jewish *messiah*—and the hopes of what the messiah will do, as seen in parallel passages from the Old Testament.
2. This requires a bit of explanation, as it may seem like this is irrelevant to temple theology.
3. In reality, nothing could be *more relevant* to the study of the temple than the related themes of *messiah* and kingdom.
 - a. Firstly, the *messiah* was the figure who would, in God’s timing, “*unite all of Israel.*” And as we saw, it certainly needed unifying!
 - b. Second, the messiah would “*restore the Temple,*” and given the corruption of the priesthood, and the various groups vying for the allegiance of Jews at the temple, this is equally important.
 - c. Thirdly, and beyond these first hopes, some prophetic texts of the Old Testament postulated that God—or His messiah—would cleanse Israel of all of their sins, in a single day. While this sounds like the familiar *Day of Atonement* ritual, the prophet Zechariah had something—someone more mysterious, and still, very real in mind.
 - d. Fourthly, first century Jews longed for justice. This messiah would somehow right all the wrongs that had been done to Israel over the ages. Specifically, he would “*fight Israel’s enemies*”—and triumph over them.
 - e. Fifth—and finally, the messiah would gather all of the nations to worship the One True Living God. He, the Lord, would do this, in His messiah—or he was not the “anointed one,” the *christos* / messiah at all.
4. In accomplishing these divine mysteries, the messiah would truly deliver Israel, as God had done in the past, as in the days of Abraham, Moses, or David. And speaking of David—this was one of the most crucial hopes of all: the full restoration of the *Davidic kingdom!*
5. The picture then, is of a priestly figure—one that forgives sins, and restores the temple, and the welfare of Israel. But he is also a *kingly* figure—an ancestor of David, one qualified in every way to assume the “throne of David” as the legitimate heir and “son” of David. As such, this messiah would liberate Israel from its great

⁶³⁶ Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 49.

foes, set it on the path of peace, that leads to life—and importantly, restore the glory of the Lord in the Temple:

- **Barker:** “The original temple vessels that had been looted by the Babylonians were returned with the first group of [returning exiles]. Basins, bowls, and censers are listed, *but there is no mention of the major items: the menorah, the ark, the golden altar ...* Later Jewish tradition hoped that [these items of significance] *would be restored in the temple in the time of the messiah: the fire, the ark, the menorah, the Spirit [of God] and the cherubim ... the faith of the first temple would be restored by the messiah.*”⁶³⁷
6. These were the hopes of God’s people in the first century—and all of these hopes are crucial to understanding the Temple, and temple theology in the Gospels.
 7. With this—we turn to the five hopes just listed, for closer examination.

IV. (#1) GOD’S MESSIAH WILL UNITE ‘ALL ISRAEL’

- **Jer. 3:18** “In those days⁶³⁸ *the house of Judah shall join the house of Israel, and together they shall come from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers for a heritage.*”
- **Ezek. 34:11-12** “For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. *As a shepherd seeks out his flock when some of his sheep have been scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep; and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.*”
- **Isa. 11:1-13** “There shall come forth *a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots* [Heb: *netzér*]. *And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, etc....* Righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins. *The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them ...*
In that day *the root of Jesse* shall stand as an ensign to the peoples; *him shall the nations seek*, and his dwellings shall be glorious. In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time *to recover the remnant which is left of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, etc. He will raise an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*”
- **Isa. 27:12-13** “In that day from the river Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt the LORD will thresh out the grain, and *you will be gathered one by one, O people of Israel.* And in that day a great trumpet will be blown, and *those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were driven out to the land of Egypt will come and worship the LORD on the holy mountain at Jerusalem.*”

⁶³⁷ Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*, 57 (emphasis added). See: *Numbers Rabbah* XV.10.

⁶³⁸ Phrases such as “*in / on that day,*” “*in those days,*” etc. are common OT expressions that anticipate to the time of the Messiah. They are important in that they represent the sure and certain fulfilment of the blessings and judgments associated with the coming Messiah. Be alert for OT phrases such as “*day of the Lord*” (*Isa.* 13:6; 58:13; *Jer.* 46:10; *Amos* 5:18; *Zech.* 14:1, etc.) and NT expressions, such as “*the one who is to come*” (*Matt.* 11:3) which are rooted in messianic expectations.

- **Matt. 19:28** “Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”
- **Matt. 10:1-6** “And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, *and to heal every disease and every infirmity*. The names of the **twelve apostles** are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. *These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”*
- **Catechism:** “Jesus accompanies his words with many ‘mighty works and wonders and signs,’ which manifest that the kingdom is present in him and attest that he was the promised Messiah.”⁶³⁹

V. (#2) GOD’S MESSIAH WILL RESTORE THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE

- “Christ was not merely another prophet, as if he had been sent to simply confirm the teachings of Moses. Rather, the Messiah’s obedience to the Old Law *enabled him to fulfill and to transform the Old Law.*”⁶⁴⁰
- **Zech. 6:12-13, 15** “Thus says the Lord of hosts, Behold, *the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall grow up in his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. It is he who shall build the temple of the Lord, and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule upon his throne. And there shall be a priest by his throne, and peaceful understanding shall be between them both ... And those who are far off shall come and help to build the temple of the Lord; and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. And this shall come to pass, if you will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God.*”
- **Zech. 14:8-10** “On that day *living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem ...it shall continue in summer as in winter. And the Lord will become king over all the earth; on that day the Lord will be one and his name one.*”
- **Jer. 33:15-18** “In those days and at that time I will cause *a righteous branch to spring forth for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness.’ For thus says the Lord: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn cereal offerings, and to make sacrifices forever.*”
- **John 2:29-23** “Jesus answered them, ‘*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*’ The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” *But he spoke of the temple of his body.* When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.”

⁶³⁹ CCC#547. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 140.

⁶⁴⁰ Levering, *Christ’s Fulfillment of Temple and Torah*, 46.

- **Matt. 21:12-15** “And *Jesus entered the temple of God and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons.* He said to them, ‘It is written, ‘*My house shall be called a house of prayer*’; but you make it a den of robbers.’ *And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.*”

VI. (#3) GOD / GOD’S MESSIAH WILL FORGIVE THEIR SINS (IN A SINGLE DAY)

- **Zech. 3:8-9** “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest ... behold, *I will bring my servant the Branch.* For behold, *upon the stone which I have set before Joshua, upon a single stone with seven facets, I will engrave its inscription, says the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the guilt of this land in a single day.* In that day, says the Lord of hosts, every one of you will invite his neighbor under his vine and under his fig tree.”
- **Zech. 13:1** “On that day there shall be *a fountain opened for the house of David* and the inhabitants of Jerusalem *to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.*”
- **Ezek. 36:33-36** “Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day that *I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt.* And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by. And they will say, ‘This land that was desolate *has become like the garden of Eden;* and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now inhabited and fortified.’ Then the nations that are left round about you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places, and replanted that which was desolate; I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it.”
- **Jer. 31:33-34** “But this is the *covenant* which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: *I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts;* and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; *for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*”
- **Matt. 1:22** “She will bear a son, *and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.*”
- **Matt. 9:2** “When Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, ‘*Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven.*’”
- **Luke 7:47-50** “Therefore I tell you, *her sins, which are many, are forgiven,* for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.” And he said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’ Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?” And he said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’”

VII. (#4) GOD’S MESSIAH WILL DEFEAT ISRAEL’S ENEMIES

- **Jer. 30:8-9** “And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord of hosts, that *I will break the yoke from off their neck, and I will burst their bonds, and strangers shall no more make servants of them.* But they shall serve the Lord their God *and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.*”
- **Zech. 14:3-4, 6** “Then the Lord will go forth *and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.* On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; so that one half of the

Mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward. ... *Then the Lord your God will come, and all the holy ones with him.*"

- **Isa. 10:20-24** "In that day the remnant of Israel and the survivors of the house of Jacob *will no more lean upon him that smote them, but will lean upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.* A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God ... For the Lord, the Lord of hosts, will make a full end, as decreed, in the midst of all the earth.
- **Isa. 19:22-25** "And the Lord will smite Egypt, smiting and healing, and they will return to the Lord, and *he will heed their supplications and heal them (!)* In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians ... In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the Lord of hosts has blessed, saying, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage.'"
- **Rom. 5:10** "For if *while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life."
- **I Cor. 15:25** "For he must reign *until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*"
- **I Cor. 15:55-57** "'O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. *But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*"
- **Catechism:** "Jesus' messianic consecration reveals his divine mission, "for the name 'Christ' implies 'he who anointed,' 'he who was anointed' and 'the very anointing with which he was anointed.'
 - *The one who anointed is the Father ...*
 - *the one who was anointed is the Son, ...*
 - *and he was anointed with the Spirit who is the anointing.*"⁶⁴¹

VIII. (#5) GOD'S MESSIAH GATHERS ALL NATIONS TO THE ONE, TRUE LIVING GOD.

- **Isa. 2:2-5** "It shall come to pass in the latter days that *the mountain of the house of the Lord* shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; *and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.'* For out of Zion shall go forth *the Law*, and *the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations ...* and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. *O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.*"
- **Isa. 14:1** "The LORD will have compassion on Jacob and will again choose Israel, and will set them in their own land, *and aliens will join them and will cleave to the house of Jacob.*"
- **Zech. 8:23** "In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, '*Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*'"

⁶⁴¹ CCC #438. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 110. St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* III, 18, 3.

- **Mark 7:26**, “*Now the woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And he said to her, ‘Let the children first be fed, for it is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.’ But she answered him, ‘Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.’ And he said to her, ‘For this saying you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter.’ And she went home, and found the child lying in bed, and the demon gone.*”
- **John 4:7-11** “*There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, ‘How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?’ For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.’”*
- **John 12:20-24** “*Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Beth-saida in Galilee, and said to him, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’ Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew went with Philip and they told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, ‘The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified.’”*
- **Matt. 28:18-20** “*And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.’”*
- **Catechism:** “*From the beginning until ‘the fullness of time’ (Gal. 4:4), the joint mission of the Father’s Word and Spirit remains hidden, but it is at work. God’s Spirit prepares for the time of the Messiah. Neither is fully revealed but both are already promised, to be watched for and welcomed at their manifestation. So, for this reason, when the Church reads the Old Testament, she searches there for what the Spirit, ‘who has spoken through the prophets,’ wants to tell us about Christ.”⁶⁴²*

⁶⁴² CCC #702. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 186.

THE TEMPLE AND THE FOUR GOSPELS (II/V)

PART II: “IN MY FATHER’S HOUSE: TEMPLE THEMES IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS”

“Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

LUKE 2:49

I. THE INFANCY NARRATIVES—JESUS’ BIRTH AND THE TEMPLE. The Infancy Narratives of *Matthew* and *Luke* are replete with temple theology; the most important aspects will be included here.

- 1. THE MAGI—AND THE MESSIAH.** The appearance of the *Magi* in *Matt. 2:1-13* reflects the Evangelist’s concerns to show that the Son of God is the Savior of the world. The infant Jesus in the son of Adam, the New Adam, whose kingdom—unlike the first Adam, with fill the earth, even as He ‘draws all nations to Himself’.⁶⁴³
 - **Catechism:** “*The magi’s coming to Jerusalem in order to pay homage to the king of the Jews shows that they seek in Israel, in the messianic light of the star of David, the one who will be king of the nations.*”⁶⁴⁴ Their coming means that *pagans can discover Jesus and worship him as Son of God and Savior of the world only by turning toward the Jews and receiving from them the messianic promise as contained in the Old Testament.*”⁶⁴⁵ The Epiphany shows that ‘*the full number of the nations*’ now takes its ‘*place in the family of the patriarchs,*’ and acquires *Israelitica dignitas*⁶⁴⁶ (are made ‘worthy of the heritage of Israel’).”⁶⁴⁷
 - **Aquinas:** “As Augustine says [in an Epiphany sermon], *the shepherds were Israelites, the Magi were Gentiles.* The former were [near] to Him, the latter far ... Both hastened to Him together *as to the cornerstone.* There was also [a] point of contrast: *for the Magi were wise and powerful; the shepherds simple and lowly.* He was also made known to the righteous as Simeon and Anna; and to sinners ... so as to show no condition of men to be excluded from Christ’s redemption.”⁶⁴⁸
 - **Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI:** “My particular greeting goes to those who, like the Magi, have come from the East. You are the representatives of so many of our brothers and sisters who are waiting, without realizing it, for the star to rise in their skies and lead them to Christ, Light of the Nations, in whom they will find the fullest response to their hearts’ deepest desires.”⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴³ *John 12:32.*

⁶⁴⁴ See: *Matt. 2:2; Num. 24:17–19; Rev. 22:16.*

⁶⁴⁵ See: *John 4:22; Matt. 2:4–6.*

⁶⁴⁶ St. Leo the Great, *Sermon 3 Epiphany* 1–3, 5: *Roman Missal*, Easter Vigil 26, Prayer after third reading.

⁶⁴⁷ CCC #528. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 133–134. “In the magi, representatives of the neighboring pagan religions, the Gospel sees the first-fruits of the nations, who welcome the good news of salvation through the Incarnation.”

⁶⁴⁸ *Summa Theologica* III Q.36 a.3.

⁶⁴⁹ Pope Benedict XVI, *God’s Revolution: World Youth Day and Other Cologne Talks* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 35. In an earlier work, he reflects on the coming of the Magi: “By way of summary, we can say:

2. LUKE'S TEMPLE FRAMEWORK.

- St. Luke *begins his Gospel in the Temple*, with the vision of Zechariah⁶⁵⁰—and *ends his Gospel in the Temple*,⁶⁵¹ with the Twelve returning to Jerusalem after Jesus' Ascension, where they were “*continually in the temple blessing God.*”⁶⁵²

3. THE PRESENTATION⁶⁵³

- a. Luke depicts Jesus as the faithful Israelite in the holy Temple, whose mother and ‘father’ dedicate Him as the “*firstborn*” to the Lord, reminiscent of Samuel. (We need only recall our earlier study on the “*firstborn priests*” of Israel.⁶⁵⁴)
- b. **St. Jerome** writes of the mystery of Christ as the first—and—only born of Mary, ever Virgin.⁶⁵⁵
- c. The figures of Simeon and Anna recapitulate *the faith of Israel at its best*, as the expectantly await the messiah.⁶⁵⁶
 - In gazing at the newborn Savior, Simeon, who awaited the “*consolation of Israel,*” bursts into joyful and prophetic song.⁶⁵⁷
 - Anna, a ‘*prophetess*’ of the northern tribe of Asher—represents the “*lost tribes*” whom the New Moses will deliver in a New Exodus. This

Old and New Testaments, Jesus and the Sacred Scripture of Israel, appear here as indivisible. The new thrust of his mission to unify Israel and the nations corresponds to the prophetic thrust of the Old Testament itself. Reconciliation in the common recognition of the kingdom of God, recognition of his will as the way, is the nucleus of Jesus’ mission, in which person and message are indivisible. *This mission is efficacious already at the moment when he lies silent in the crib.*” Ratzinger, *Many Religions—One Covenant: Israel, the Church, and the World*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), 28.

⁶⁵⁰ See: *Luke* 1:1-23.

⁶⁵¹ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, vol. 28, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 165. “Unlike the compositions of the other evangelists, the Lucan Gospel begins and ends in Jerusalem: after the prologue, the first scene is that of Zechariah offering incense in the Jerusalem Temple (*Luke* 1:9), where he learns of the birth of a son, and at the end Luke tells how the Eleven and the others returned to Jerusalem from Bethany to spend their time in the Temple (24:53). In its own way the infancy narrative strikes the chord of the journey-to-Jerusalem motif in depicting the child Jesus taken there twice by his parents (2:22, 42). The scene of the twelve-year-old Jesus sitting among the Temple teachers, who were astounded at his understanding and his answers, foreshadows in a sense not only his Temple teaching-ministry (19:47), but identifies him as one who has to be in his Father’s house (2:49; cf. 19:45-46). Moreover, the angel’s words to Mary reveal that the child to be born to her will sit on the throne of David and be king over the house of Jacob (1:32-33)—implying a special relationship to Jerusalem.”

⁶⁵² *Luke* 24:53.

⁶⁵³ *Luke* 2:22-40.

⁶⁵⁴ As discussed in an earlier chapter; see: *Exod.* 13:2, 12-13.

⁶⁵⁵ St. Jerome: “All heretics have gone astray by not understanding the mystery of his nativity. The statement ‘*he who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord*’ is more applicable to the special nativity of the Savior than to that of all men, for Christ alone opened the closed doors of the womb of virginity, *which nevertheless remained permanently closed*. This is the closed east door, through which only the high priest enters and leaves, and nevertheless it is always closed” (*Against the Pelagians* 2.4).

⁶⁵⁶ CCC #529: “With Simeon and Anna, all Israel awaits its *encounter* with the Savior—the name given to this event in the Byzantine tradition.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 134.

⁶⁵⁷ See: *Luke* 2:25-32.

consecrated virgin and widow *did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day.*⁶⁵⁸

- **Catechism:** “Jesus’ *circumcision*, on the eighth day after his birth, is the sign of his incorporation into Abraham’s descendants, *into the people of the covenant*. It is the sign of his submission to the Law and his deputation to Israel’s worship, in which he will participate throughout his life. This sign *prefigures that ‘circumcision of Christ’ which is Baptism.*”⁶⁵⁹
- **Ratzinger:** “The lamb appears clearly as the ransom through which Israel is delivered from the death of the firstborn. Now this ransom serves also as a reminder. It is ultimately the firstborn itself to which God lays claim: ‘Consecrate to me all the first-born; whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine’ (*Exod. 13:2*) ... This fact should help us appreciate the emphatic way in which St. Luke in his infancy narratives describes Jesus as the “first-born” (see: *Luke 2:7*).”⁶⁶⁰

4. THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE.⁶⁶¹

- a. As with the Presentation, the Finding in the Temple is a mystery of Christ’s life recorded only in *Luke*.
- b. Once again, the Holy Family is *in the Holy Temple*, having gone up “*every year at the feast of Passover.*”⁶⁶²
 - Luke 2:46-49 After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ And when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously.’ And he said to them, ‘*How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?*”
 - “Why should this cause incomprehension? His parents had been told that he would be Lord and Messiah and Savior and *assume the throne of his father David* ... No matter how much they had been told of the child’s special character, having [the young Jesus refer to] *God as his Father* would come as a shock. But the incomprehension of the parents also serves a broader literary function ... Luke shows the reader how *even the most faithful of the people ‘did not understand’ in the time of the prophet’s first*

⁶⁵⁸ *Luke 2:37*.

⁶⁵⁹ CCC #527. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 133.

⁶⁶⁰ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 38.

⁶⁶¹ *Luke 2:41-52*.

⁶⁶² *Luke 2:41*. “On pilgrimages to Jerusalem, the Jews used to go in two groups—one of men, the other of women. Children could go with either group. This explains how they could go a day’s journey before they discovered the Child was missing when the families regrouped to camp.” *Saint Luke’s Gospel*, The Navarre Bible (Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press; Scepter Publishers, 2005), 50.

visitation ... so must those who follow his story ... like Mary, 'keep these words in their heart.'"⁶⁶³

- “No man can have two fathers, as Tertullian pithily and accurately says;⁶⁶⁴ therefore, the Mother has to be a virgin. The point of this *Christologically motivated virginity* lies, not in an anti-sexual, merely bodily integrity ... but in *Mary's motherhood*; in order to be the Mother of the messianic Son of God, who can have no other Father than God, *she must be overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, and she must say to that overshadowing a Yes that includes her whole person, both body and soul.* The point, then, is the *spiritual motherhood that Jesus himself promised to those who hear and follow God's word in pure faith.*”⁶⁶⁵

II. **SPOTLIGHT: THE VIRGIN MARY AND THE TEMPLE.** The mystery of Christ is inexplicable apart from the Virgin who bore Him in her womb. Like her Son, the mystery of Mary's life is unveiled in the shadow of the Temple.

1. **THE TEMPLE VISION: A PIERCING SWORD.** In the above “Presentation” scene, Simeon tells Mary in the Temple courts that “a sword will pierce her heart.”⁶⁶⁶ Commenting on this mystery, Ratzinger writes:
 - “The sword shall pierce her heart—this statement foreshadows the Son's Passion, which will become her own passion. *This passion already begins with her next visit to the Temple: she must accept the precedence of Jesus' true Father and of his house, the Temple; she must learn to release the Son she has borne.* She must complete the Yes to God's will that made her a mother by withdrawing into the background and letting Jesus enter upon his mission. Jesus' rebuffs during his public life and her withdrawal are an important step that will reach its goal on the Cross with the words *'behold, your son.'*”⁶⁶⁷
2. **'HAIL, FULL OF GRACE'—THE MYSTERY OF THE MAGNIFICAT.**⁶⁶⁸
 - a. **'Hail, Full of Grace' (Luke 1:28).** The Annunciation is replete with temple theology—but it requires careful attention to see it more fully.

⁶⁶³ Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, vol. 3, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 61. Johnson observes that this expression “is the first note in the theme of ‘ignorance’ that plays such an important role in *Luke-Acts*.”

⁶⁶⁴ Tertullian, *Against Marcion*, 4, 10.

⁶⁶⁵ Joseph Ratzinger and Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Mary: The Church at the Source*, trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 105–106 (emphases added). See: *Luke* 8:21.

⁶⁶⁶ *Luke* 2:35.

⁶⁶⁷ Ratzinger *Mary: Church at the Source*, 76. He adds: “It is no longer Jesus but the disciple who is her son. *To accept and to be available is the first step required of her; to let go and to release is the second.* Only in this way does her motherhood become complete: the ‘blessed is the womb that bore you’ comes true only when it enters into the other beatitude: ‘Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it’ (*Luke* 11:27–28). By this means Mary is prepared for the mystery of the Cross, which does not simply end on Golgotha. *Her Son remains a sign of contradiction, and she is thus kept to the very end in the pain of this contradiction, in the pain of her messianic motherhood.*”

⁶⁶⁸ See: *Luke* 1:46–55.

- In the Annunciation, the Angel Gabriel declares to Mary, “*Hail, full of grace,*” ‘*Hail*’ is from the Greek, *chaîré* and is not merely a simple salutation (“hello”) – but “*an invitation to joy.*”⁶⁶⁹
 - As such, Gabriel’s greeting represents *an invitation to messianic joy*. The age of the New Temple has arrived at last.
 - There are only four occurrences of *chaîré* in the Greek Old Testament (LXX), specifically: in *Zech. 9:9*,⁶⁷⁰ as well as *Joel 2:21*;⁶⁷¹ *Zeph. 3:14*,⁶⁷² and *Lam. 4:21*.⁶⁷³
 - In each context, *chaîré* is associated with messianic joy.
 - *Here is a clear prophecy about the coming Messiah*—a clear fulfillment of the prophecy as to the coming of the anointed Davidic messiah in *Zech. 9*.⁶⁷⁴
 - Mary is the faithful Israelite, the Daughter of Zion, whose yes to God is the reversal of Eve’s refusal to align her will to God’s will.
 - **St. Justin Martyr:** “[Jesus] became man by the Virgin *so that the course which was taken by disobedience in the beginning through the agency of the serpent might be also the very course by which it would be put down*. Eve, a virgin and undefiled, conceived the word of the serpent and bore disobedience and death. But the Virgin Mary received faith and joy when the angel Gabriel announced to her the glad tidings that the Spirit of the Lord would come upon her and the power of the Most High would *overshadow her*, for which reason the Holy One being born of her is the Son of God. And she replied ‘*Be it done unto me according to your word*’ [Luke 1:38].”⁶⁷⁵
- b. **Mary, the New Hannah.**
- Mary’s Magnificat contains a number of literary and theological parallels with the “Song of Hannah” in *I Samuel 2* (see Illustration 5).
 - At Shiloh, Hannah, the barren yet faithful Israelite—vows to dedicate her “firstborn” to the Lord.⁶⁷⁶ Her son Samuel becomes the holy prophet,

⁶⁶⁹ Ignace De La Potterie, *Mary in the Mystery of the Covenant*. Bertrand Buby, trans., (Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1992), 55. The form of the term is *chaîré* is imperative, and stronger than the “present active” form. As such, it implores action—a simple greeting is not tenable.

⁶⁷⁰ *Zech. 9:9* “Rejoice greatly [*chaîrē*], O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass.”

⁶⁷¹ *Joel 2:21* “Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice [*chaîrē*], for the LORD has done great things!”

⁶⁷² *Zeph. 3:14* “Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice [*chaîrē*] and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!

⁶⁷³ *Lam. 4:21* “Rejoice [*chaîrē*] and be glad, O daughter of Edom, dweller in the land of Uz ...”

⁶⁷⁴ A further Davidic connection is evident: Solomon, the “*son of David*,” when he is anointed as king, rides on a donkey – and not just any donkey, but that of his father David (see: *I Ki. 1:38-40*).

⁶⁷⁵ St. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, 100.

⁶⁷⁶ *I Sam. 1:11* “And she vowed a vow and said, ‘O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy maidservant, and remember me, and not forget thy maidservant, but wilt give to thy maidservant a son, *then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life*, and no razor shall touch his head.’” (The mention of ‘*no razor touching his head*’ is likely a reference to the so-called “Nazirite vow” of consecration (see: *Num. 6:1-21*).

priest and judge, who “anoints” (Greek: *christos*) Saul, Israel’s first king—and later, David himself.

- Thus, Mary and Hannah share a number of fascinating Davidic and messianic connections (see Illustration 5 below).

ILLUSTRATION 5: HANNAH AND MARY: FORBEARERS OF DAVIDIC FIGURES

HANNAH’S HYMN (I SAM 2:2-10)	MARY’S MAGNIFICAT (LUKE 1:46-55)
1. "My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in Lord, my mouth derides my enemies because I rejoice in thy salvation (2:1a)	1. "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden (1:46-48)
2. "There is no one <i>holy like the Lord</i> " (2:2a)	2. " <i>holy is his name</i> " (1:49b)
3. "Talk no more so very <i>proudly</i> ... for the Lord is a God of knowledge and by him <i>actions are weighed</i> "	3. "he had showed strength in his arm. He has <i>scattered the proud</i> in the imagination of their hearts" (1:52)
4. "The <i>bows of the mighty are broken</i> , but the <i>feeble gird on strength</i> "	4. "He has <i>put down the mighty from their thrones</i> , and <i>exalted those of low degree</i> " (1:52)
5. "Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but <i>those who were hungry have ceased to hunger</i> " (2:5a)	5. "He has <i>filled the hungry with good things</i> " (1:53a)
6. "He will <i>guard the feet of his faithful ones</i> ... (2:9)	6. "and <i>his mercy is on those who fear him</i> from generation to generation" (1:50)

c. **‘The power of the Most High will overshadow you’ (Luke 1:35).**

- This expression of Gabriel to Mary likewise reverberates with temple theology—particularly the term “*overshadow*.”
- Luke intends an allusion to the *shekinah* (glory cloud) which “abode” or “overshadowed” the Ark of the Covenant at the end of *Exodus*:
 - **Exod.40:35** “And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting, because the [glory] cloud *abode* [Greek: *epeskiasen*] upon it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.”
- The Greek verb *episkiazō* (“to dwell, abide, overshadow”) occurs just twice in *Luke*: the first occurrence is in 1:35, at the Annunciation scene, in which the Holy Spirit “*overshadows*” Mary—a clear allusion to the tabernacle of *Exodus*.
- Interestingly, the second occurrence of the *epeskiazō* occurs in the Transfiguration scene—where a cloud “*overshadows*” Peter, James and John—another clear reference to the tabernacle of *Exodus*.

- Luke’s point in the present instance⁶⁷⁷ registers loud and clear: Mary is the *new tabernacle*, the “*new ark of the New Covenant*”—as many Church fathers described:
 - **St. Leo the Great:** “For this wondrous child-bearing of the holy Virgin produced in her offspring one person which was truly human and truly Divine, because neither substance so retained their properties that there could be any division of persons in them; *nor was the creature taken into partnership with its Creator in such a way that the One was the in-dweller, and the other the dwelling* but so that the one nature was blended with the other.”⁶⁷⁸
 - **Aquinas:** “God so prepares and endows those, whom He chooses for some particular office, *that they are rendered capable of fulfilling it ...* Now the Blessed Virgin was chosen by God to be His Mother. Therefore there can be no doubt that God, *by His grace, made her worthy of that office.*”⁶⁷⁹
 - **Gary Anderson:** “Mary does not become God, of course, *but she does ‘house’ God in the most intimate way imaginable.* The extrinsic manner of relating God to temple is put to good use: Mary both receives the divine Son and gives birth to him. *But in the logic of the Incarnation this moment transforms her forever. Her body remains holy forever thereafter as a result of housing the Holy One of Israel. And as the temple could be revered and praised on its own terms without any worry of committing some form of idolatrous apostasy, so Mary could be revered and adored.* Not as a god[ress], but as *the one who housed God.* If one could turn to the temple and say, *‘how lovely is thy dwelling place,’* and attend to its every architectural detail, why would one not do the same with the *Theotokos?*”⁶⁸⁰
- d. **‘All Generations will call me blessed’ (Luke 1:48).**
- **Ratzinger:** “This phrase from the *Magnificat*, the spirit-filled prayer of praise that Mary addresses to the living God, is thus one of the principal foundations of Christian devotion to her. *The Church invented nothing new of her own when she began to extol Mary;* she did not plummet from the worship of the one God to the praise of man. The Church does what she must; she carries out the task assigned her from the beginning. At the time Luke was writing this text, the second generation of Christianity had already arrived, and the ‘*family*’ of the Jews had been joined by that of the Gentiles, who had been incorporated into the Church of Jesus Christ. The expression ‘*all generations, all families*’ was beginning to be filled with

⁶⁷⁷ Similarly, in the Transfiguration scene, *episkiazo* recalls the glory cloud of Yahweh in the wilderness; now, on the mountain, it prepares the disciples for *the revelation of the Son’s own glory*, which He shares with the Father.

⁶⁷⁸ St. Leo the Great, *Sermon 23.1*. Similarly, St. Athanasius writes: “O noble Virgin, truly you are greater than any other greatness. For who is your equal in greatness, O dwelling place of God the Word? To whom among all creatures shall I compare you, O Virgin? *You are greater than them all O Covenant, clothed with purity instead of gold! You are the Ark in which is found the golden vessel containing the true manna, that is, the flesh in which divinity resides*” (*Homily of the Papyrus of Turin*, 71:216).

⁶⁷⁹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* III,Q27, a4.

⁶⁸⁰ Gary Anderson, “Mary in the Old Testament” in *Pro Ecclesia*, Vol. XVI, No. 1 (33-55), here, 50.

historical reality. The Evangelist would certainly not have transmitted Mary's prophecy if it had seemed to him an indifferent or obsolete item. He wished in his Gospel to record 'with care' what *'the eyewitnesses and ministers of the word'*⁶⁸¹ had *handed on from the beginning*, in order to give the faith of Christianity, which was then striding onto the stage of world history, a reliable guide for its future course."⁶⁸²

III. JOHN THE BAPTIST: THE BEGINNINGS OF A COUNTER-TEMPLE MOVEMENT.

The life and ministry of John the Baptist may be viewed as a *counter-temple movement*. As the forerunner of Jesus, he prepares Israel for *the coming of the New Temple in Jesus*. If John represents its beginnings, Jesus' life and ministry is the completion of the counter-temple movement—as He fulfills and transfigures Israel's Temple *in Himself*. The following evidence reflects this counter-temple motif in the Synoptic Gospels.⁶⁸³

1. **INTO THE DESERT.** Nicholas Perrin lists seven indisputable features of the ministry of John the Baptist,⁶⁸⁴ among them that he *"lived an ascetical lifestyle which took him to the desert."*⁶⁸⁵ This particular feature alone suggests a challenge on the part of John to the political powers in Jerusalem:

⁶⁸¹ *Luke* 1:2–3.

⁶⁸² Ratzinger *Mary: The Church at the Source*, 61–62 (emphases added).

⁶⁸³ The phrase "*counter-temple movement*" must be clearly distinguished from "*anti-temple movement*"—the two are not at all the same. To say that John (and Jesus) implemented a counter-temple movement is uncontroversial, given the preponderance of evidence in the Four Gospels. However, it would be incorrect and unhelpful to in any way suggest that John (and / or Jesus) were implementing an anti-temple movement in Israel. This is not the case. John and Jesus envisioned a restoration and renewal of the Temple—beginning with John's ministry, and culminating in the coming of the Messiah. Jesus did prophesy of the Temple's destruction—yet He never said "I will destroy this temple" (*John* 2:19; his opponents bring forth a false charge—see: *Matt.* 26:61; *Mark* 14:58). Jesus was a faithful Jew who loved the Temple and longed for its full restoration—and understood that His mission from the Father would inaugurate a new age of the Temple, culminating in His death and Resurrection. As the *Catechism* states: "Like the prophets before him *Jesus expressed the deepest respect for the Temple in Jerusalem*. It was in the Temple that Joseph and Mary presented him forty days after his birth. At the age of twelve he decided to remain in the Temple to remind his parents that he must be about his Father's business. He went there each year during his hidden life at least for Passover. His public ministry itself was patterned by his pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the great Jewish feasts" (CCC #583).

⁶⁸⁴ Nicholas Perrin, *Jesus the Temple* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 38. On disputes about the historical ministry of John the Baptist, see pp. 37–38. Also: Jean Daniélou, *Jean-Baptiste. Témoin de l'agneau* (Paris: Seuil, 1964); J. A. T. Robinson, "The Baptism of John and the Qumran Community," and "Elijah, John, and Jesus," *Twelve New Testament Studies* (London: SCM, 1962) 11–27 and 28–52; Raymond E. Brown, "John the Baptist in the Gospel of John," *New Testament Studies* (Garden City, NY: Image, Doubleday, 1968, originally 1965) 174–84; John P. Meier, "John the Baptist in Matthew's Gospel," *JBL* 99 (1980) 383–405; *A Marginal Jew, Rethinking the Historical Jesus: Volume Two, Mentor, Message, and Miracles* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1994), 19–62. Meier writes, "Our study of the chronology of Jesus' life at the end of Volume One had a somber result. It placed two historical figures, both connected with two striking symbols of judgment and death, at two dates that bracket the ministry of Jesus: John the Baptist with his baptism at the beginning of a.d. 28 and Pontius Pilate with the cross on April 7, a.d. 30" (*Marginal Jew*, Vol. Two, 19).

⁶⁸⁵ Nicholas Perrin, *Jesus the Temple* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 38. The remaining six features are: (2) he preached the necessity of a baptism of repentance in light of Israel's sin; (3) he expected the near arrival of 'eschatological judgment'; (4) he attracted large crowds; (5) he included Jesus among his adherents through baptism—until Jesus broke off to start a new movement; (6) he was not embraced by the ruling temple authorities of his day; and (7) he dies at the hands of Herod Antipas.

- “But going into the desert *and starting a movement* is to do anything but hide or retreat, especially in first-century Israel ... in effect he was saying, ‘*Yahweh is beginning again with a new Exodus and starting a new nation. It is starting under my auspices—here and now*’ ... John knew that his activities could only be interpreted as being politically charged.”⁶⁸⁶
2. **REPENTANCE—A TEMPLE ACTION.**
- **Mark 1:4** “John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance *for the forgiveness of sins*.”⁶⁸⁷
 - “... Since in the normal course of things, the temple was the place where one confessed one’s sins and offered the prescribed sacrifice, *John’s invitation to receive forgiveness outside of the temple apparatus essentially rendered the Jerusalem institution redundant*. Apparently, like his religious competitors down the road at Qumran, John had come to believe that *a new temple was already taking shape* ... Under the Baptizer, Israel is starting afresh, and *with this new start comes, as a matter of course, a new temple*.”⁶⁸⁸
- IV. **JESUS, THE NEW ADAM.** A number of strands of evidence in the Gospels⁶⁸⁹ indicate that the Evangelists present Jesus as the New Adam, ruling over a new creation.
1. **THE SON OF GOD.** “The Gospels portray Jesus as an Adam figure who is *inaugurating a new creation*.”⁶⁹⁰
- **Matt. 1:1** “The *book of the genealogy* of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”⁶⁹¹
 - **Luke 3:38** “... the son of Enos, the son of Seth, *the son of Adam, the son of God*.”
 - “The reason ... that Luke’s genealogy ends with ‘Adam, the son of God’ is to identify Jesus as an end-time Adam, the true Son of God, resisting the temptations to which Adam and Eve succumbed.”⁶⁹²
2. **THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.** Jesus’ forty days in the wilderness *recapitulates* Adam’s temptations and Israel’s forty years in the wilderness.⁶⁹³

⁶⁸⁶ Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 38. Perrin includes numerous citations from Josephus of first-century “desert-based insurgency movements” by way of example. Incidentally, Perrin is *not* painting John’s ministry as an insurgency as such. Nor does Perrin presume that John’s break with Jerusalem and the Temple were “absolute.” He agrees with Meier that “all claims to salvation on the basis of racial solidarity with Abraham were unavailing” (see: *Jesus the Temple*, 40, note #86).

⁶⁸⁷ See also *Matt. 3:1-3* “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*.’ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

⁶⁸⁸ Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 41.

⁶⁸⁹ The letters of St. Paul—and the book of *Revelation* must be added to this “New Adam / New Creation” topic, but will be discussed separately, in later chapters.

⁶⁹⁰ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 171.

⁶⁹¹ “*Book of the genealogy*” (Greek: *biblios geneseōs*) can be translated as “book of beginnings” or even “book of genesis.” (See: Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 171).

⁶⁹² Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 172.

⁶⁹³ “Jesus succeeds in facing the same temptations to which Israel succumbed” (Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 172.) Compare *Deut. 8:3 // Matt. 4:4; Deut. 6:16 // Matt. 4:7; Deut. 6:13 // Matt. 4:10*.

- **Catechism:** “Driven by the Spirit into the desert, Jesus remains there for forty days without eating; he lives among wild beasts, and angels minister to him. At the end of this time *Satan tempts him three times, seeking to compromise his filial attitude toward God.* Jesus rebuffs these attacks, *which recapitulate the temptations of Adam in Paradise and of Israel in the desert,* and the devil leaves him “until an opportune time.”⁶⁹⁴
- **St. Prudentius:**

“Still the pinnacle stands, outlasting the Temple’s destruction
For the corner raised up from that stone which the builders rejected
Will remain throughout all ages forever and ever.
Now it is head of the temple and holds the new stones together.”⁶⁹⁵
- That “*the angels ministered to him*”⁶⁹⁶ is likely a comment by the Evangelists to underscore Satan’s (Lucifer’s) disobedience in contrast to the holy angels.⁶⁹⁷
- **Catechism:** “Christ is the center of the angelic world. They are *his* angels: “When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him.”⁶⁹⁸
- Throughout Lent, the Church’s long tradition of *fasting, prayer,* and *almsgiving* in “unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert.”⁶⁹⁹
- **St. Peter Chrysologus:** “So you see, my friends, the fact that we fast during Lent is not of human invention. The authority is divine and mystical and not taken for granted. Nor is it based on an earthly custom but on heavenly secrets. Lent [*Quadragesima*] contains the four-sided teaching of four decades of faith, because perfection is always four-sided. The number forty [*quadragesimus*] and the number ten [*denarius*], which hold sacraments both in heaven and on earth because a square is not free to open, are used to explain the undertaking of the Lord’s fast.”⁷⁰⁰

⁶⁹⁴ CCC #538. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 137. See also CCC #539: “... *Jesus is the new Adam who remained faithful just where the first Adam had given in to temptation. Jesus fulfills Israel’s vocation perfectly:* in contrast to those who had once provoked God during forty years in the desert, Christ reveals himself as God’s Servant, totally obedient to the divine will. In this, *Jesus is the devil’s conqueror:* he “binds the strong man” to take back his plunder. *Jesus’ victory over the tempter in the desert anticipates victory at the Passion, the supreme act of obedience of his filial love for the Father.*”

⁶⁹⁵ St. Prudentius (348-410 A.D.), *Scenes from Sacred History*, 31.

⁶⁹⁶ *Matt.* 4:11 // *Mark* 1:13.

⁶⁹⁷ “... The angels were always on earth to minister to him ... At the Lord’s behest they withdrew from him so that the devil might have room to work against Christ. If the devil were to see angels around him, he might not approach him. In this same way the devil comes invisibly to tempt the faithful.” Anonymous (5th cent. A.D.), *Opus Imperfectum (Incomplete Commentary on Matthew)*, Homily 5.

⁶⁹⁸ CCC #331. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 86. Also CCC #414: “Satan or the devil and the other demons are fallen angels who have freely refused to serve God and his plan. Their choice against God is definitive. They try to associate man in their revolt against God.”

⁶⁹⁹ CCC #540. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 138.

⁷⁰⁰ St. Peter Chrysologus (380-450 A.D.), *Sermons*, 11.4.

V. THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM—THE WORLD BEYOND THE GARDEN.

1. JESUS, THE TEMPLE BUILDING MESSIAH.

- It should be recalled that Adam’s vocation was to be a *temple builder*, who extended the temple Eden to the whole world—the *world beyond the Garden*.
- As Adam (and Eve) fulfilled his mission to “*be fruitful and “multiply,”* and to “*fill the whole earth and subdue it*”⁷⁰¹ the glory of God’s presence would be extended over the face of the earth.
- Adam’s disobedience disrupted this pattern, as he and Eve were expelled from Eden. They and their offspring indeed began to “fill the earth”—but not always in ways that brought *God’s temple presence to the world*—or *the world to God’s temple presence*.
- Later, Abraham, Moses—and eventually David—were each in their respective eras in salvation history called *to recapitulate Adam’s temple building mission*.
- In various ways, this mission was fulfilled—in *half-measures*, over and over again.
- With this *temple building* motif in mind, we return to an idea raised in the previous chapter, that closely related to temple theology is *the messiah* and *the coming kingdom*.
- Now we can go further. Precisely stated, we can add this: whereas Adam ultimately failed in his temple building vocation, Jesus, the New Adam, recapitulates Adam’s mission, and brings it to humanity as a divine and growing reality—for all people, at all times, in all places. Jesus *announces the Kingdom of God*, and in countless words and deeds reveals that with His Incarnation, *the kingdom is now here*. Jesus is God’s divine temple builder, and through His cross and Resurrection, it has reached the furthest ends of the earth.
- Moreover, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church, built on the Apostles appointed by Jesus himself, *continues his temple building action, in proclaiming ‘the Kingdom of God’ is at hand*.

2. ‘NOT MADE WITH HUMAN HANDS’—DANIEL’S HEAVENLY TEMPLE IMAGE.

- a. Beneath the kingdom of God / temple building paradigm of the Gospels are several texts in the prophet *Daniel* specifically—*Dan. 2:31-45* and *7:13-14*.
- b. In *Dan. 2:31-45*, the prophet correctly interprets Nebuchadnezzar’s dream correctly. In fact, Daniel explains that it is not the prophet himself, but that “*there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days.*”⁷⁰²
- c. Daniel’s vision of the statue, made of gold, silver, bronze, and iron (mixed with clay) represent “the kingdoms of this world.”⁷⁰³ The vision culminates with the mysterious “stone” which “*fills the whole earth:*”

⁷⁰¹ *Gen. 1:28*.

⁷⁰² *Dan. 2:28*.

⁷⁰³ The kingdoms depicted appear to be: Babylonian, Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman empires, respectively, though there is some debate: “The periodization of history into a sequence of empires reflects the shaping of the political history of the ancient Near East by a succession of empires, *Assyria, Media/Babylon* (respectively to the north/east and to the south/west of the old Assyrian empire), *Persia, Greece, and Rome* ... By c. 300 [B.C.], this historical outline has become a formal scheme of four empires, *Assyria, Media or Babylon, Persia,*

- **Dan. 2:33** “But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.”
- d. Here is a vivid image and prefiguration of ‘the kingdom of God’!
 - e. In the following passage, it is told that this heavenly kingdom, though small at the outset, shatters all of the man-made kingdoms as it “fills the earth” with its presence. (Recalling our much earlier discussion of the phrase “*not made with hands*” is helpful, as here too, it reflects *cosmic temple* language.)
 - **Dan. 2:44–45** “And in the days of those kings *the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever; just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.*”
 - f. Finally, what is a kingdom without a king? In *Dan. 7:13*, the prophet envisions “one like a *Son of Man*” coming on the “clouds of heaven.” Here, the earlier kingdom imagery is recalled—now with the royal Son of Man in the midst of it, as its unending king:
 - **Dan. 7:14:** “And to him was given *dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.*”
 - g. Together, these texts help us to see within the many “kingdom of God” passages in the Gospels a fulfilment of the Danielic vision.
 - h. But we can go further still: when we examine the Gospels with our earlier “temple building” insights, it becomes clear that as Jesus (and the apostles) announce and enact the kingdom of God, Adam’s (and Israel’s) temple building vocation *is finally being realized*—in Jesus, the New Adam and true Israelite, the Son of Man in the flesh.
3. **‘KINGDOM / TEMPLE BUILDING’ IN THE GOSPELS.** There are far more relevant “kingdom” passages than can possibly be discussed here which, in one way or another, portray Jesus as God’s divine ‘temple builder’. Suffice it to say that most every passage that pertains to “*the kingdom of God*,”⁷⁰⁴ whether a saying, parable, action, etc. functions (in some sense) as a temple building motif. The following are a few key examples.
- **Mark 1:14–15** “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel.’”
 - *Immediately after His temptation in the wilderness (recalling Israel’s wilderness experience), Mark presents Jesus’ inaugural message: ‘the kingdom of God is at*

and *Greece*, to which *Rome* is later added.” John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, vol. 30, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 40–41.

⁷⁰⁴ Or ‘*kingdom of heaven*’ as in *Matt. 3:2; 4:17:5:3, 10, 19, 20:7:21*, etc.

hand. Jesus' disciples are given the opportunity—and power to do so in His name—to do what Adam / Israel had failed to do—'repent' and 'believe'.

- **Mark 4:30-32** “And he said, ‘*With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.*’”
 - *The Parable of the Mustard Seed is an excellent example, in parabolic form, of the motif of “filling of the earth” with God’s temple presence—in and through the ‘kingdom of God.’ Like Daniel’s small stone, the mustard seed begins in a miniscule way, yet becomes ‘the greatest of shrubs.’*
- **Matt. 8:10-13** “Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, *many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.*’ And to the centurion Jesus said, ‘Go; be it done for you as you have believed.’ *And the servant was healed at that very moment.*”
 - *The Healing of the Centurion’s Servant confirms that the ‘filling of the earth with God’s temple presence’ knows no barriers—his faith is rewarded, while the faithless in Israel are warned of God’s judgment. Note, too that the context is in the form of a miracle story, and that ‘healing’ is, as we learned, primarily associated with the Temple.*
- **Matt. 28:18-20** “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.*’”
 - *In many ways, the ‘Great Commission’ is the classic ‘temple building’ motif in ‘Trinitarian fashion: the Apostles are called to continue the ‘fill the earth’ with the Father’s presence in them ... by the authority of the Son, as the baptize and teach through the power of the Holy Spirit.*⁷⁰⁵
- **Matt. 6:10-11** “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our debts, As we also have forgiven our debtors ...”
 - *In the context of the Sermon on the Mount, these petitions from the Lord’s Prayer reflect the necessity of forgiveness, in order for God’s temple presence to*

⁷⁰⁵ Beyond this, Beale amply shows that the Great Commission is a recapitulation of *II Chron.* 36:23: “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him. Let him go up.’ His reasons are as follows: (1) In the Hebrew bible, *II Chronicles* was the last book in the (developing) canon, and so 36:23 becomes the last verse of the Scripture, just as the Great Commission concludes Matthew’s Gospel; (2) *Matthew’s* genealogy is based, in part, on the genealogy in *I Chron.* 1-3; and (3) elsewhere, Scripture refers to Cyrus as a “messiah” (*Isa.* 44:28-45:1). As Beale summarizes, “Thus, the concluding [Great Commission] is not spoken by a *pagan king to theocratic Israel but spoken by the true, divine king to the beginning remnant of true Israel, ‘the Twelve’*” (*The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 177).

*grow. Jesus teaches His disciples to pray 'Our Father...' - and to ask for His forgiveness, to the extent that they forgive others.*⁷⁰⁶

- **Luke 9:57-62** “As they were going along the road, a man said to him, ‘I will follow you wherever you go.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but *the Son of Man* has nowhere to lay his head.’ To another he said, ‘Follow me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, let me first go and bury my father.’ But he said to him, ‘Leave the dead to bury their own dead; *but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.*’ Another said, ‘I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.’ Jesus said to him, ‘No one who puts his hand to the plow *and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.*”
 - *Here, recall Adam’s / Israel’s reluctance to be God’s ‘temple builder’—placing worldly concerns over the expansion of the kingdom. Spiritually, “looking back” is like Israel’s desire to ‘return to Egypt’ or Lot’s wife to Sodom. Such double-mindedness leads to death, not life. In order for God’s temple presence to radiate through the earth, it must ‘possess’ the believer in full measure.*
- **Luke 9:1-2** “And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal.”
 - *Finally, Jesus’ proclamation of the Kingdom does not end with the Twelve—it is only the beginning. In their apostolic ministry, the Father’s temple building mission, enjoined by the Son, continues in the power of the Holy Spirit ... to the ends of the earth.*

4. **CONCLUSION.** In this chapter, we examined a number of themes in temple theology in the Synoptic Gospels:
- a. We examined a number of texts from the Infancy Narratives; especially the coming of the Magi, the Presentation and the Fining in the Temple;
 - b. We spotlighted “Mary” and her special relationship to the Temple;
 - c. We discussed John the Baptist, as a counter-temple movement;
 - d. We showed various ways in which Jesus is the New Adam;
 - e. Finally, we returned to our earlier ‘temple building’ motif—and gave examples of how Jesus (with His Apostles)—in ‘proclaiming the Kingdom of God’—is revealed as God’s divine temple builder, recapitulating and perfecting the vocation of Adam and Israel, for the sake of all the world.

Now, in the next chapter, we turn to other aspects of temple theology in the Synoptic Gospels.

⁷⁰⁶ Perrin suggests that the Jewish theology of “The Jubilee Year” stands behind this saying (see: *Lev. 25; Deut. 15:1-11*). A root cause of the exile was ‘economic injustice.’ He writes: “This falls in line with the burden of the prophetic witness which closely links *exile* with *Israel’s failure to observe the ‘seventh seven’, that is, the radical program of debt remission laid out in the jubilee requirements*” (Jesus the Temple, 135). He adds: “The dramatic announcement of return from exile and restitution through a much-delayed release was no pie-in-the-sky matter, for in receiving alms and re-dispensing them to the poor, Jesus was *doing jubilee ... Jubilee was not an end in itself ... The main point of land distribution and debt forgiveness was that God’s temple might soon pick up where it left off.* The time, however ... *Israel would find that their temple had a whole new look. Through messiah, Israel’s God was building a temple whose treasure would neither decay or go missing.* The breathtaking news for Jesus’ peers lay in His claim that *temple-building was going on in the present*” (emphases added. See also: Gary Anderson, *Sin: A History* (Cambridge: Yale Univ. Press, 2010).

THE TEMPLE AND THE FOUR GOSPELS (III/V)

PART III: “SOMETHING GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE IS HERE: TEMPLE THEMES IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS (CONTINUED)”

“**A**t that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, ‘Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.’ He said to them, ‘*Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the Temple is here.*”

MATTHEW 12:1-6

I. CALLING THE TWELVE: RECAPITULATING THE TRUE ISRAEL

1. **RECAPITULATING THE NEW ISRAEL.** In calling ‘the Twelve’ Jesus “begins to re-gather the tribes of Israel *by beginning to call his twelve Apostles ... [they] represent the microcosmic true Israel* under their true leader, Jesus (i.e. Yahweh), though Jesus is also portrayed as a latter-day Moses.”⁷⁰⁷ This action reveals Jesus as the New Moses, who leads the true Israel towards a New Exodus. Yet, as one ‘*greater than Moses,*’ Jesus is not only *prophet*, but also *priest* and *king*.
 - Luke 8:1 “Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, preaching and bringing *the good news of the kingdom of God. And the Twelve were with him ...*”⁷⁰⁸
 - Catechism: “*The Church is apostolic.* She is built on a lasting foundation: ‘the twelve apostles of the Lamb’ (*Rev. 21:14*).”⁷⁰⁹ “The Lord Jesus chose men to form *the college of the twelve apostles*, and the apostles did the same when they chose collaborators to succeed them in their ministry.”⁷¹⁰
 - **St. Clement:** “So preaching everywhere in country and town, [the Apostles] appointed their first-fruits, when they had proved them by the Spirit, *to be bishops and deacons unto them that should believe.* And this they did in no new fashion; for indeed it had been written *concerning bishops and deacons from very ancient times*; for Scripture says in a certain place, ‘*I will appoint their bishops in righteousness and their deacons in faith.*”⁷¹¹
2. **JESUS’ APPOINTMENT OF ‘THE TWELVE’ RECAPITULATES MOSES AT MOUNT SINAI.** In the Gospels, the concentric circles of disciples around Jesus, from the many, to

⁷⁰⁷ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 174.

⁷⁰⁸ On the Twelve, see: *Matt.* 10:1-4; 19:28; 20:17; 26:14, 20, 47; *Mark* 4:10; 6:7; 9:35; 10:32; 11:11; 14:10, 17, 20, 34; *Luke* 8:1; 9:1, 12; 18:31; 22:3, 30, 47; *John* 6:67, 70, 71; 20:24.

⁷⁰⁹ CCC # 869. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 230.

⁷¹⁰ CCC #1577. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 394.

⁷¹¹ St. Clement, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 42.4-5.

the seventy, to the Twelve, and His inner circle of three, recapitulates the concentric circles of Moses and his “disciples” of Israel:

- 1) The many *disciples* // The nation of *Israel*
- 2) The *seventy* disciples // The *seventy* elders” (*Exod.* 24:1; *Luke* 10:1, 17)
- 3) The *twelve* apostles // The twelve tribes / pillars (*Exod.* 24:4; *Matt.* 10:1)
- 4) *Peter, James, John* // *Aaron, Nadab, Abihu* (*Exod.* 24:9; *Matt.* 17:1)⁷¹²

This parallel is important for a variety of reasons, not least that Moses’ actions on Mount Sinai are, as we discussed earlier, a recapitulation of Eden. Just as Moses “ascends” the mountain of God, so too will the New Moses “ascend” mountains: the Mount of Beatitudes, to proclaim the kingdom of God; the Mount of Transfiguration, where He prefigures His resurrected glory in the flesh; and ultimately, Mount Calvary, where He “ascends” to His cross, and reverses the disobedience of Adam, making peace with God possible for all of humanity.

3. **Eschatological priest-judges.** It may be added that Jesus assigns an eschatological role to the Twelve, as *priestly judges* over the true Israel:

- **Matt. 19:28** “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on *twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*”⁷¹³
- **Luke 22:28-30** “You are those who have continued with me in my trials; and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, *that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*”

In other words, their priestly role transcends the Temple in Jerusalem, since it is His body that is the true and living Temple of God. As such, in the heavenly kingdom, as the end of the book of *Revelation* describes, the priestly apostles are the “foundations” of the new temple-city:

- **Rev. 21:14** “And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

II. SPOTLIGHT: ST. PETER AND THE KEYS OF THE NEW TEMPLE

1. **PETER’S CONFESSION.** Peter’s role as the head of the Twelve recapitulates the Davidic kingdom:⁷¹⁴

a. **The Power of the Keys.** As the Catechism states:

- “The ‘*power of the keys*’ designates authority to govern the house of God, which is the Church. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, confirmed this mandate after his Resurrection: ‘*Feed my sheep.*’⁷¹⁵ The power to ‘*bind and loose*’ connotes the authority to absolve sins, to pronounce doctrinal judgments, and to make disciplinary decisions in the Church. Jesus entrusted this

⁷¹² On Peter, James and John, see also: *Mark* 5:37; 9:2; 13:3; 14:33.

⁷¹³ The phrase “*you who have followed me*” is not to be taken as a generic reference to *all disciples*, but rather, an implicit remark about the betrayal (and subsequent replacement) of Judas among the Twelve.

⁷¹⁴ CCC #552: “Simon Peter holds the first place in the college of the Twelve” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 141); CCC #880: “When Christ instituted the Twelve, he constituted [them] in the form of a college or permanent assembly, at the head of which he placed Peter, chosen from among them” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 233).

⁷¹⁵ *John* 21:15–17; see: 10:11.

authority to the Church through the ministry of the apostles and in particular through the ministry of Peter, the only one to whom he specifically entrusted the keys of the kingdom.”⁷¹⁶

- **Matt. 16:18-20** “Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. *And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*”

2. THE ‘*EKKLESIA*’ OF THE KINGDOM OF ROME ... AND OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Why does Jesus take Peter and the Twelve to the region of Caesarea Philippi?

- a. First, it was located out of the way—in the rocky hill country of Upper Galilee, and well north of the region surrounding Capernaum in Lower Galilee, where most of Jesus’ Galilean ministry was located.
- b. Second, Caesarea Philippi had one main attraction: the Roman *Temple of Pan*.⁷¹⁷ It was here, at this ‘*ekklesia*’ (Greek: “assembly”) that Jesus declares that Peter is the “rock” upon which *His ekklesia* will be built.⁷¹⁸ (*See the illustration of the Temple of Pan—and the archeological remains at Caesarea Philippi in the Appendix.)
- c. The contrast could not be more striking—at “the gates of hell” of this Roman *ekklesia*, Jesus declares that Peter is the foundation stone upon which the Church will be built. Jesus—not Caesar is Lord, and the Kingdom of God is breaking into the violent, idolatrous empire of the world.
- d. The “keys” of this kingdom belong not to Caesar’s power structure, but to the fisherman from Galilee—and just as Rome had the power to govern, i.e., “bind and loose” so will the prince of the Apostles (and those in fellowship with him) have *power from heaven—divine power*—to not only govern, but truly forgive sins, in the power of God working through Christ in the Holy Spirit.⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁶ CCC #553. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 142.

⁷¹⁷ “The Greeks dedicated the cave from which the water flows to the deity Pan, naming the city Paneas, a name which survives as Bania, the modern city built on the same location as ancient Caesarea Philippi. The Romans assigned the district to King Herod the Great (20 B.C.), who erected a white marble temple there in honor of Augustus and placed the image of the emperor near the altar of Pan. After Herod’s death in 4 B.C. Philip the tetrarch beautified the city and named it *Caesarea*; it became known as *Caesarea Philippi* to distinguish it from the city with the same name on the Palestinian coast to the southwest [Caesarea Maritima]. In New Testament times Caesarea Philippi was a place to worship Pan as well as to honor Caesar.” (From: “Caesarea Philippi” in: *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, 180.)

⁷¹⁸ “‘*This rock*’ has been identified variously with Peter’s faith or confession, with Peter’s preaching office, with the truth revealed to Peter, with the twelve apostles, with Jesus, with Jesus’ teaching, and even with God himself. *All this is special pleading. The most natural interpretation is that of Roman Catholic tradition: the rock is Peter.*” W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004, 627. It should be noted that neither Davies or Allison are Roman Catholic.

⁷¹⁹ *Ekklesia* (“assembly, church”) occurs only twice in the Gospels—here and at *Matt. 18:18*.

3. **THE NEW EKKLESIA AND THE NEW EXODUS.** Finally, on the notion of *ekklesia*—Jesus’ expression is not only a contrast with the Roman temple, but likely, a *recapitulation of Israel under Moses’ authority at Sinai*:
- “In line with this, the early Christians—like the Qumran [community], thought of themselves as a counterpart to the Sinai-Congregation,⁷²⁰ which in *Deuteronomy* is called the *ekklesia* [in the Greek Old Testament (LXX)].⁷²¹ *That Matthew himself perceived the connection we need not doubt.*”⁷²²
 - Allison and Davies add that the biblical typology in *Matt.* 1-5—as well as “numerous parallels between Jesus and Moses entail that the church had its origin in a *new exodus*.”
4. **MATTHEW’S DAVIDIC CHRISTOLOGY.** From the outset, Matthew develops a “Davidic Christology,” that prepares us to “Peter’s confession” and Jesus’ response as a scene saturated with temple theology. Numerous times in *Matthew*, Jesus is called ‘*son of David*,’⁷²³ and the first such occurrence is in 1:1:
- a. “The genealogy that follows further underscores Jesus’ Davidic lineage. As scholars note, its division into *three sets of fourteen generations* also seems to highlight its Davidic nature, since *fourteen is the numeric value of David’s name in Hebrew*. This reading is supported by the recognition that David’s name is the *fourteenth* name in the list.”⁷²⁴
 - b. Adding to this initial evidence of the “Davidic” pattern in *Matthew*, Barber adds the following:
 - 1) Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the “city of David.”⁷²⁵
 - 2) The Baptism of the “Son of God.” Just as the Spirit of the Lord came upon Solomon at his anointing, so the Spirit comes down upon Jesus at His baptism.⁷²⁶
 - 3) Jesus’ “Davidic Exorcistic and Healing Powers.”⁷²⁷

⁷²⁰ See: *I Cor.* 10:1–5; *Heb.* 12:18–24.

⁷²¹ See: *Exod.* 4:10; 9:10; 18:16; 31:30; also: Philo, *Decalogue.* 32.

⁷²² W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 629.

⁷²³ *Matt.* 1:1, 20; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30, 31; 21:9, 15; 22:42.

⁷²⁴ M. Barber, “Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder and Peter’s Priestly Role in Matthew 16:16–19” in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132, no. 4 (2013): 933–951, here 935. See also: Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 161–188. Allison and Davies: “The section offers proof of the title: Jesus is the son of Abraham and the Son of David. More particularly, because ‘the heritage of the king is from son to son only’ (*Sir.* 45:25), and because Jesus is, through his father, a descendant of king David, in this respect *he qualifies as the Davidic Messiah*” (p. 187).

⁷²⁵ *Matt.* 2:4; *I Sam.* 16:1; see: *John* 7:42.

⁷²⁶ *Matt.* 3:16; *I Sam.* 16:13. Barber: “That Davidic allusions are in play is strongly supported by the fact that the voice from heaven identifies Jesus as God’s son” (“Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder,” 936).

⁷²⁷ Barber: “Those seeking healing specifically address him as [son of David] (*Matt* 9:27; 20:31). This title is also linked to his role as an exorcist (*Matt* 15:22). Notably, David was associated with exorcistic and healing abilities (see 1 Sam 16:14–23; Josephus, *A.J.* 166–68; 11QPsa XI, 2–11; *L.A.B.* 60:1). Solomon also had a reputation as an exorcist and healer (see Josephus, *A.J.* 8:42–49; *Apoc. Adam* 7:13; cf. also *Wisd.* 7:17–22). That Matthew links such activity to Jesus’ messianic role is clear” (“Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder,” 936).

- 4) The “Son of David” Enters Jerusalem.⁷²⁸
 - 5) The “Passion of the Davidic king.”⁷²⁹
- c. Much more compelling evidence cannot be discussed here.⁷³⁰ One final example may be mentioned—Barber’s discussion of “Peter, the Keys and the Priestly Eliakim,”⁷³¹ in which he examines numerous parallels between *Matt.* 16:19⁷³² and *Isa.* 22:22.⁷³³
- First, both *Matthew* and *Isaiah* concern “the giving of authority” (opening and shutting // binding and loosing).
 - Second, both passages refer to Davidic motifs (house of David // Son of God / messiah).
 - Third and finally, Peter is juxtaposed with Eliakim—whom Barber amply shows to be not only a *royal figure* in David’s kingdom, as most scholars agree, but also a *priestly figure*.⁷³⁴
- d. Barber: “In sum, the imagery comes together to form one coherent picture. *Jesus is the Davidic messiah, who, like the son of David, will build a temple, understood as the community.* Given that the community is described as a temple, it is no wonder that Jesus describes Peter’s leadership role over it in terms of priestly authority; as God appointed the priestly Eliakim in *Isaiah*, *Jesus establishes Peter as a priestly figure over the temple community.*”

III. JESUS’ MIRACLES AND EXORCISMS AS ‘TEMPLE ACTIONS’

1. JESUS’ MIRACLES: THE HEALING POWER OF THE NEW TEMPLE

⁷²⁸ Jesus’ “triumphal entry into Jerusalem (*Matt.* 21:9) recalls Solomon’s royal coronation (*I Ki.* 1:33, 38). Barber: “Matthew explicitly ties Jesus’ entry into the city to Zechariah’s eschatological prophecy of a coming king (*Zech.* 9:9), a passage modeled on Solomonic traditions. The crowd’s acclamation flows naturally from such allusions: [*hosanna to the son of David*] (*Matt.* 21:9) (Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder,” 936).

⁷²⁹ Barber: “Jesus’ royal identity is especially underscored in Matthew’s passion narrative. Jesus suffers as [*king of the Jews*] (*Matt.* 27:29, 37). Caiaphas also directly links Jesus’ supposed identity as the ‘Christ’ with divine sonship status (*Matt.* 27:63: [*the Christ, the son of God*])” in: “Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder,” 937.

⁷³⁰ See these sections: “The Son of David and Temple Building” (937-40) and “Temple-Community Imagery Elsewhere in Matthew” (940-41) in: Barber, “Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder.”

⁷³¹ Barber, “Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder,” 942-945.

⁷³² *Matt.* 16:19 “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

⁷³³ *Isa.* 22:22 “And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.”

⁷³⁴ See: Barber, “Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder,” 942-43. As evidence, Barber cites a number of texts from Second Temple Judaism, which describe Eliakim in priestly garb, invested with priestly dignity and engaged in priestly actions. (Examples: *Targum on Isaiah 22*; *Leviticus Rabbah 5:5*.) He argues: “How did ancient interpreters come to the conclusion that Eliakim was a priestly figure? This view appears to be rooted in the language of the Hebrew text of *Isaiah 22* itself. Eliakim is portrayed as wearing the garments [a tunic] and a [sash]—two garments specifically associated with the high priest (see for example, *Exod.* 28:4) Indeed, his role in the sanctuary may be suggested by *Isa.* 22:24, where he is given authority over “every small vessel, from the cups to all the flagons” (“Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder,” 943). Additionally, priestly responsibility for “the keys of the temple” is attributed to in rabbinic literature. See: *II Bar* 10:18; *4 Bar.* 4:4-5; *Leviticus Rabbah* 19:6, etc.)

- a. “The restoration [of Israel] involves various kinds of healings, which were prophesied to occur when Israel would undergo her true end-times restoration to God ... Jesus [] is re-establishing the *new creation and kingdom, which Adam should have established*. Seen within the framework of the new creation, Christ’s miracles of healing *not only established the end-time kingdom but signaled the beginning of the new creation*, since the healings were a reversal of the curse of the old fallen world. *The miracles were a sign of the inbreaking new creation*, where people would be completely healed.”⁷³⁵
- **Isa. 32:3-4** “Then the eyes of those who see will not be closed, and the ears of those who hear will hearken. The mind of the rash will have good judgment, and the tongue of the stammerers will speak readily and distinctly.”
 - **Isa. 42:7** “I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.”
 - **Matt. 4:23-24** “And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them.”
- b. Jesus’ “*contagious holiness*” recalls the power of the high priest in his anointed garments”.⁷³⁶
- **Exod. 30:29** “You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them will become holy.”⁷³⁷
- c. Healings in / near the temple:
- **Matt. 21:14-15** “And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ they were indignant ...”
 - Inasmuch as the “synagogue” was in relationship to the temple, Jesus’ many healings in the synagogue—for which He was constantly challenged by temple authorities—may be added into this category as well.⁷³⁸

⁷³⁵ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 174 (emphases added).

⁷³⁶ Fletcher-Louis, “Priests and Priesthood.” 702. I am indebted to Fletcher-Louis for the apt phrase. See also: Perrin, “Jesus the Exorcistic High Priest” in *Jesus the Temple*, 168-70: “The eschatological high priest will restore Israel by *delivering the remnant from the demonic power and sitting in judgment on the Gentiles*” (here, 168). Perrin cites a related text from the Dead Sea Scrolls (11Q13) which depicts the messiah as the priest-king Melchizidek of *Psa. 110*, who delivers the righteous “*from the power of Belial*.”

⁷³⁷ See also *Ezek. 44:19; Wisd.18:20-25*.

⁷³⁸ *Matt. 12:9-15* “And he went on from there, *and entered their synagogue. And behold, there was a man with a withered hand*. And they asked him, ‘Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?’ so that they might accuse him. He said to them, ‘What man of you, if he has one sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.’ *Then he said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, whole like the other.*”

- **Perrin:** “When it came to divine healing, there was no better place to find it than in the temple. Jesus’ acts of healing easily lend themselves to being interpreted within just this [temple] context.”⁷³⁹ “That the itinerant Jesus attained his fame primarily through his therapeutic abilities, together with the fact that the temple was the primary venue for healing within Judaism, makes it altogether plausible that Jesus’ healing ministry, which he [] shared with his disciples, was meant to make off the movement as the mobile embodiment of the temple.”⁷⁴⁰
2. **JESUS’ EXORCISMS: PURIFYING THE UNCLEAN FROM THE LAND OF THE TEMPLE.**
- a. **Expelling the Unclean.**
- It will be recalled that in ancient temples, a key priestly duty was guarding the gates of the temple, determining who could enter—and who was banned from entering.⁷⁴¹
 - The priest was the guardian of the temple, admitting the clean and expelling the unclean. Recall that Adam’s failure in the Garden, in admitting in the Serpent may be interpreted as a dereliction of just this priestly duty.
 - In this way, Jesus’ exorcisms may be seen as a recapitulation of Adam’s role in Genesis, as well as the high priest’s role throughout the Old Testament.
- b. **A key text from Zechariah.** Added to this starting point is a key text in the prophet *Zechariah*:
- **Zech. 13:1-2** “On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness. And on that day, says the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more; and also I will remove from the land the prophets and the unclean spirit.”⁷⁴²
 - “Jesus’ conflict with the temple dignitaries at his arrest, a moment ... he seems to have anticipated and interpreted in light of Zechariah 13:7.”⁷⁴³
 - “In situating Jesus’ *exorcistic activity* within the context of Zechariah 13, that is, as a symbolic expression of Yahweh’s imminent intention to

But the Pharisees went out and took counsel against him, how to destroy him.” Similarly, see Jesus’ synagogue-related healings in: *Mark* 1:21-28; 3:1-6; 5:21-24; *Luke* 4:16-30 (esp. v. 18); 8:40-42, 49-56; 13:8-17.

⁷³⁹ Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 153.

⁷⁴⁰ Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 154.

⁷⁴¹ See the earlier discussion of “gate liturgies” in a previous chapter.

⁷⁴² “Here is a passage [*Zech.* 13] which tells of the clash between the *true, Davidic ‘shepherd’* of Yahweh (v. 7), on the one side, and the ‘false prophets’ (vv. 2-6) who abuse their charge as they are carried along by the ‘unclean spirit’ (v. 2), on the other.” Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 162.

⁷⁴³ *Zech.* 13:7 “*Strike the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered ...*” Perrin: “I conclude that it was the master himself who pulled the phrase ‘unclean spirit’ from Zechariah 13:2 and pushed it to the forefront of the community’s consciousness ... he applied the phrase ... not only to fill out the scriptural interpretative grid which he commanded, *but to give distinctive significance to his own exorcistic powers*” (Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 162).

purify the land of idolatry and dark spiritual forces, we recognize its inextricable political [power] within the first-century context ... As pious first-century Jews saw it, linking hands with the Romans was the steep slippery-slope to the incursion of idolatry, demonic spirits, and ultimately, the desecration of the land, which had been one of the central precipitating causes of the exile.”⁷⁴⁴

c. **Examining Mark 5 in light of this backdrop.**

- Mark 5:1-20 records one of Jesus’ most prolific miracles, the healing of the Gerasenes demoniac—and the expulsion of the unclean spirit(s) into the herd of swine.⁷⁴⁵
- The exorcism is set on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee—in Hellenistic territory, near the site of the ancient city of Hippos, one of the twelve cities of the Decapolis, and the locale of one of Herod’s fortresses.
- “Jesus’ exorcism ... would have not only effected a substantial loss of animal property, but also, given that the Roman soldiers garrisoned at nearby Hippos would have likely depended upon the swine as a food source, served to deprive the legionnaires of a staple delicacy. In this respect, Jesus’ measures amounted, albeit in an indirect way, to an act of political sabotage. The symbolic irony could hardly have been lost on those present.”⁷⁴⁶

IV. THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS—THE TRUE, ATONING HIGH PRIEST.

1. **THE REVELATION OF THE TRANSFIGURATION.** The Transfiguration of Jesus is a crucial, revelatory scene in the Gospels. What does it reveal? At least three primary mysteries are shown:

- a. First, the Transfiguration “*discloses His divine glory*, confirming Peter’s confession.”⁷⁴⁷
 - Origen: “But when He is transfigured, *His face also shines as the sun* that he may be manifested to the children of light who have put off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light,⁷⁴⁸ and are no longer the children of darkness or night but have become the sons of day, and walk honestly as in the day.⁷⁴⁹ Being manifested, He will shine unto them not simply as the sun, but as demonstrated to be *the sun of righteousness*.”⁷⁵⁰

⁷⁴⁴ Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 164.

⁷⁴⁵ See: Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, vol. 34A, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 271-89; John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, vol. 2, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2002), 162-71; Adela Yarbro Collins and Harold W. Attridge, *Mark: A Commentary on the Gospel of Mark*, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 263-74.

⁷⁴⁶ Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 164.

⁷⁴⁷ CCC #555. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 142.

⁷⁴⁸ See: *John* 12:36.

⁷⁴⁹ See: *Rom.* 13:13.

⁷⁵⁰ Origen, *Commentary on Matthew* 12.37.

- b. Second, the Transfiguration “reveals that he will have to go by the way of the Cross at Jerusalem in order to ‘*enter into his glory*.’⁷⁵¹ Moses and Elijah had seen God’s glory on the Mountain; the Law and the Prophets had announced the Messiah’s sufferings.⁷⁵² *Christ’s Passion is the will of the Father: the Son acts as God’s servant; the cloud indicates the presence of the Holy Spirit.*”
- c. Third, the Transfiguration is a sign of Christ’s Resurrection—and our own: “On the threshold of the public life: the baptism; on the threshold of the Passover: the Transfiguration. Jesus’ baptism proclaimed ‘*the mystery of the first regeneration*,’ namely, our Baptism; the Transfiguration ‘*is the sacrament of the second regeneration*:’ our own Resurrection.⁷⁵³ From now on we share in the Lord’s Resurrection through the Spirit who acts in the sacraments of the Body of Christ. *The Transfiguration gives us a foretaste of Christ’s glorious coming*, when he ‘will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body.’⁷⁵⁴
2. **THE TRANSFIGURATION: A RECAPITULATION OF THE ATONING HIGH PRIEST.**
Beyond these mysteries of faith, the Transfiguration plunges us deep into the reality of the Old Testament:
- a. First, and most broadly, “When Jesus, in circumstances strongly reminiscent of *Exod. 24* and *34*, goes up on a mountain and is transfigured into light, the reader is to infer that history has come full circle, that the eschatological expectations of Judaism have begun to find their fulfillment. The eschatological prophet, the one like Moses and Elijah, has appeared, and the light of the Resurrection and *parousia* has already shone forth. *Israel’s primal history is being recapitulated by her Messiah, God’s Son, the eschatological embodiment of true Israel.*”⁷⁵⁵
- b. Second, and more pointedly, Jesus’ ascending the “high mountain”⁷⁵⁶ recalls Moses’ going up Mount Sinai to meet God,⁷⁵⁷ which in turn recapitulates Adam’s experiencing the presence of God in Eden.⁷⁵⁸
- It may be added that Jesus’ ascent also recalls the high priest’s “ascent” to the *Holy of Holies*, which, it will be recalled, was not only the inner most place in the Temple, but also, *the upper most place in the Temple*.
- c. Thirdly, Jesus’ dazzling appearance recalls the high priest—who radiated the glory of God: *Luke 9:29* “And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his [garments] *became dazzling white.*”⁷⁵⁹

⁷⁵¹ *Luke 24:26.*

⁷⁵² See: *Luke 24:27.*

⁷⁵³ See: St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III, Q45, a4, ad 2.

⁷⁵⁴ *Phil. 3:21.*

⁷⁵⁵ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 684.

⁷⁵⁶ See: *Matt. 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke. 9:28.*

⁷⁵⁷ See: *Exod. 19:20; 24:12-15.*

⁷⁵⁸ See: *Gen. 3:8.*

⁷⁵⁹ See *Matt. 17:2 // Mark 9:23.*

- **Fletcher-Louis:** “[This recalls the] “light-giving properties of the high priest’s garments in general and, in particular, his *dazzling white linen garments of the Day of Atonement*.”⁷⁶⁰
- “We also regularly find the view that the high priest’s garments, particularly the stones, are *iridescent, light-giving garments*, which means that ... the Urim (and Thummim)⁷⁶¹ are identified with the garments and that an association with God’s own glorious light-filled garments is implied ... And, so, also Yahweh is ‘*clothed with honor and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment*’ (Psa. 104:1–2).⁷⁶²
- **Philo of Alexandria:** “When this same high priest enters into the innermost parts of the holy temple, he is clothed in the variegated garment, and he also assumes linen robe, made of the very finest flax. *And this is an emblem of vigor, and incorruptibility, and the most brilliant light*. For such a veil is a thing very difficult to be broken, *and it is made of nothing mortal, and when it is properly and carefully purified it has a most clear and brilliant appearance*.”⁷⁶³

V. JESUS’ TEMPLE SAYINGS.

1. **INTRODUCTION.** Jesus’ temple action (i.e. the “cleansing of the temple”) will be treated in the next chapter. Similarly, since the temple theology of Christ’s Passion will be dealt with in its own chapter later, only one category remains to be examined at present—various temple sayings of Jesus.
 - a. The majority of “temple sayings” in the Gospels concern the coming *judgment* upon the Temple. As such, they are prophetic utterances of the end of era of the natural, physical Temple—and the inauguration of the supernatural Temple—Jesus himself.
 - b. Yet, there are two other sayings which will be discussed first; each of which is deeply Christological in nature.
2. **SOMETHING GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE IS HERE.**
 - **Matt. 12:6, 42** “I tell you, *something greater than the temple is here* ... The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she

⁷⁶⁰ Fletcher-Louis, “Priests and Priesthood,” 702. Moreover, “language in Matthew’s version [of the Transfiguration] associates the mountaintop revelation of Jesus’ identity with the installation of a new (royal) high priest at the New Year’s festivals.” See: *I Macc.*10:21; Josephus, *Antiquities* XIII: 303-308; XV:50-52; *Jewish War* I:73; *Jubilees* 32:2-9.

⁷⁶¹ Fletcher-Louis: “In one Qumran text the Urim and Thummim is somehow identified with the primal light, the perfect light (’ *ortm*) which God himself creates for his dwelling on the first day of creation (4Q392 frag. 1 lines 4–5). Fletcher-Louis, “God’s Image, His Cosmic Temple and the High Priest,” in *Heaven on Earth*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Simon Gathercole (Carlisle [England: Paternoster Press, 2004]), 91

⁷⁶² Fletcher-Louis, “God’s Image, His Cosmic Temple and the High Priest,” 91. He adds that “The gods of Israel’s neighbors are clothed in light or luminescent garments.”

⁷⁶³ Philo, *De Somnis* [“On Dreams”] I:126-127: “When this same high priest enters into the innermost parts of the holy temple, he is clothed in the variegated garment, and he also assumes another linen robe, made of the very finest flax. And this is an emblem of vigor, and incorruptibility, and the most brilliant light. For such a veil is a thing very difficult to be broken, and it is made of nothing mortal, and when it is properly and carefully purified it has a most clear and brilliant appearance.”

came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, *something greater than Solomon is here.*"

- a. In reality, these are not one but two independent sayings. The first (*'something greater than the temple is here'*) is given in the context of Jesus' teaching. The introductory "I say to you" underlines the theme of Christological authority."⁷⁶⁴
- b. Beale adds:
 - "Jesus is 'greater than Solomon' because He is a greater king and had more wisdom ... Similarly, Jesus is greater than the Temple now the temple because 'God's presence is more manifest in the Him than in the Temple. On Him, not the Temple rests the *shekinah glory*'"⁷⁶⁵
- c. **Davies and Allison** point out that:
 - "This and the next two verses are *Matthew's* own work, without parallel in *Mark* or *Luke*. The point they make is this: 'if the priests who serve in the Temple on the Sabbath are innocent of wrong-doing ... how much more innocent are the disciples, who are 'serving' Jesus, 'one greater than the Temple'?'"⁷⁶⁶
- d. **St. Hilary** taught:
 - "Christ also reminded them of another prophecy so that they might learn that all things that were spoken of previously were accomplished in him through the law, that the priests in the temple broke the Sabbath without offense, *clearly revealing that Jesus himself was the temple.*"⁷⁶⁷
- e. The second saying in *Matt.* 12 is related to the first—but not given in the immediate context of the Sabbath.⁷⁶⁸ The "queen of the south" is a reference to the queen of Sheba.
 - "Note that, according to *I Kings* 10:1, the queen of Sheba came to Solomon 'to test him with hard questions.' So like the Pharisees she tested a king. But unlike them, she could see the truth."⁷⁶⁹
 - "Israel has had the opportunity to see and hear one greater than Jonah and *one greater than Solomon*. All to no avail. Therefore her judgment will be the harsher."⁷⁷⁰

3. THE TRUE CORNERSTONE.

⁷⁶⁴ Davies and Allison *Matthew*, 314.

⁷⁶⁵ Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 178, citing A. Cole, *The New Temple* (London: Tyndale, 1950, 12.

⁷⁶⁶ Davies and Allison *Matthew*, 313, citing D. J. Moo, 'Jesus and the Authority of the Mosaic Law', *JSNT* 20 (1984), pp. 16–17.

⁷⁶⁷ St. Hilary of Poitiers (315–367 A.D.) *On Matthew* 12.4.

⁷⁶⁸ The basic context is as follows: "After Jesus is asked by the scribes and Pharisees for a sign, he responds with a speech which takes up three points, the first being the sign to 'this generation' (the sign of Jonah; 39–40), the second being the sayings about past generations (41–42), the third being the fate of 'this generation' (vv. 43–45)". Davies and Allison *Matthew*, 351.

⁷⁶⁹ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 359.

⁷⁷⁰ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 360.

- **Matt. 21:42** “Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures: *‘The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.’*”
 - “The proverbial-sounding line ... emphasized Jesus’ rejection by unbelievers and his vindication by God. In the OT it appears to be about Israel, rejected by the nations ... Here the subject is *Jesus himself, rejected by the Jewish leaders [yet] vindicated by God.*”⁷⁷¹
- As Jesus and His disciples made their way to Jerusalem for His final Passover they would have sung the *‘Psalms of Ascent’*⁷⁷²:
 - **Ratzinger:** “These are hymns of thanksgiving to God for liberating Israel from Egypt, but they also speak of *the stone rejected by the builders that wondrously turned out to be the cornerstone.*”⁷⁷³
- Matthew’s temple Christology helps Augustine make sense of the spiritual life of the believer:
 - **St. Augustine:** “Without the cornerstone which is Christ, I do not see how men can be built into a house of God, to contain God dwelling in them, without being born again, which cannot happen before they are born the first time.”⁷⁷⁴
- St. Peter draws upon this temple imagery in his first epistle:⁷⁷⁵
 - **I Pet. 2:4–8** “Come to him, to *that living stone*, rejected by men but in God’s sight chosen and precious; and *like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house*, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and he who believes in him will not be put to shame.’ To you therefore who believe, he is precious, but for those who do not believe, ‘The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner,’ and *‘A stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall’*; for they stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.”
- On this “cornerstone” imagery, Vatican II states:
 - **Lumen Gentium:** “Often the Church has also been called *the building of God.*⁷⁷⁶ The Lord Himself compared Himself to *the stone which the builders rejected, but which was made into the cornerstone.*⁷⁷⁷ On this foundation the Church is built *by the apostles,*⁷⁷⁸ and from it the Church receives

⁷⁷¹ Davies and Allison Jr., *Matthew*, 185.

⁷⁷² *Psa.* 120–34.

⁷⁷³ Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two*: 145–146. See: *Psa.* 118:22. The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.”

⁷⁷⁴ St. Augustine, *Letters* 187.31.

⁷⁷⁵ This New Testament text makes allusions to *Isa.* 8:14 and 28:16: “Behold, I am laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone, *a precious cornerstone*, of a sure foundation ...”

⁷⁷⁶ See: *I Cor.* 3:9.

⁷⁷⁷ *Matt.* 21:42; see: *Acts* 4:11; *I Pet.* 2:7; *Psa.* 117:2

⁷⁷⁸ See: *I Cor.* 3:11.

durability and consolidation. This edifice has many names to describe it: *the house of God*⁷⁷⁹ in which dwells His family; *the household of God*⁷⁸⁰ in the Spirit; the dwelling place of God among men;³⁹ and, especially, *the holy temple*. *This Temple, symbolized in places of worship built out of stone, is praised by the Holy Fathers and, not without reason, is compared in the liturgy to the Holy City, the New Jerusalem*. As living stones we here on earth are built into it.”⁷⁸¹

4. **THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE.** Some of Jesus’ sharpest critiques are aimed at the Temple authorities.⁷⁸²
- a. A number of these remarks are either set in the temple, or only ring explicable in a “temple context.” For example:
 - **Matt. 6:2-5** “Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”
 - **Catechism:** “On the threshold of his Passion Jesus announced the coming destruction of this splendid building, of which there would not remain ‘one stone upon another.’⁷⁸³ By doing so, he announced a sign of the last days, which were to begin with his own Passover.”⁷⁸⁴
 - **Edersheim:** “This [Court of Women] covered a space upwards of 200 feet square. All around ran a simple colonnade, and within it, against the wall, the thirteen chests, or ‘trumpets,’ for charitable contributions were placed ... It was probably into one of these that the poor widow dropped her ‘two mites’ (Luke 21:2). These thirteen chests were narrow at the mouth and wide at the bottom, shaped liked trumpets, whence their name. *Their specific objects were carefully marked on them. Nine were for the receipt of what was legally due by worshippers; the other four for strictly voluntary gifts ...*⁷⁸⁵ It is probably in ironical allusion to the form and name of these treasure-chests that the Lord, making use of the word ‘trumpet,’

⁷⁷⁹ See: *I Tim.* 3:15.

⁷⁸⁰ See: *Eph.* 2:19–22.

³⁹ *Rev.* 21:3.

⁷⁸¹ *Lumen Gentium*, 6. “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: Lumen Gentium,” in *Vatican II Documents* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011).

⁷⁸² Example: *Matt.* 3:7; 12:34; 22:18; 23: 13; *Luke* 3:7; 12:56; 13:15.

⁷⁸³ See: *Matt.* 24:1–2.

⁷⁸⁴ CCC# 585. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 150.

⁷⁸⁵ “Into Trumpet 3. those women who had to bring turtledoves for a burnt- and a sin-offering dropped their equivalent in money, which was daily taken out and a corresponding number of turtledoves offered. This not only saved the labor of so many separate sacrifices, but spared the modesty of those who might not wish to have the occasion or the circumstances of their offering to be publicly known. *Into this trumpet Mary the mother of Jesus must have dropped the value of her offering² when the aged Simeon took the infant Savior ‘in his arms, and blessed God’*” (Edersheim, *The Temple*, 48).

describes the conduct of those who, in their almsgiving, *sought glory from men as ‘sounding a trumpet’ before them*—that is, carrying before them, as it were, in full display one of these trumpet-shaped alms-boxes (literally called in the Talmud, ‘trumpets’), *and, as it were, sounding it.*⁷⁸⁶

- b. A number of times in the Gospels, Jesus indicates that the physical Temple in Jerusalem would soon pass away. The classic example is found in *Mark’s* ‘little apocalypse:’
- **Mark 13:1-2** And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!’ And Jesus said to him, ‘*Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another, that will not be thrown down.*’”
 - **Evans:** “Shaken by the prediction of *the temple’s destruction* (v 2), the disciples privately inquire of Jesus ‘*when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?*’ (v 4). Jesus answers their questions with a staggering string of predictions and warnings ... But Jesus’ disciples are not to be unduly alarmed; these must happen, but the end time is yet to come. This is because there are many more events that must take place: nations and kingdoms at war, earthquakes, and famines are among the ‘beginning of birth pains.’ *These birth pains signify the crumbling of the old order as it gives way to the kingdom of God, which will finally manifest itself in its fullness.* As the disciples await the unfolding of these events, they must look to themselves and be ready ... But they need not worry about what to say; they need only speak what is given to them at that time, for it will be God’s Holy Spirit that will be speaking through them. Even more disheartening than political opposition and persecution will be family wrath and betrayal. *Proclamation of the gospel will not make the apostles popular; on the contrary, they will be hated by all on account of the one who has sent them.*”⁷⁸⁷
 - **Navarre:** “The prophecy of the destruction of the temple was clearly contrary to the nationalistic ideas of the Jews. To their minds such a catastrophe could only happen as part of the end of the world ... The apostles ask when this will happen and what signs will indicate that the temple is about to be destroyed. This destruction, Jesus explains, prefigures the end of the world, *but does not imply that the latter is imminent; each event has characteristics of its own. Thus, the destruction of the temple will have its own signals and will happen in the next generation.* The end of the world, however, is a secret known to God alone, and not even the Son wishes to reveal when this final event will happen.”⁷⁸⁸
 - **Catechism:** “Jesus venerated the Temple by going up to it for the Jewish feasts of pilgrimage, and with a jealous love he loved this dwelling of God among men. The Temple prefigures his own mystery. When he

⁷⁸⁶ Edersheim, *The Temple*, 49.

⁷⁸⁷ Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, vol. 34B, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2001), 313.

⁷⁸⁸ *Saint Mark’s Gospel*, The Navarre Bible (Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press; Scepter Publishers, 2005), 122. See: *Mark* 13:32–33; *Matt.* 24:36.

announces its destruction, it is as a manifestation of his own execution and of the entry into a new age in the history of salvation, when his Body would be the definitive Temple.”⁷⁸⁹

⁷⁸⁹ CCC# 593. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 152.

THE TEMPLE AND THE FOUR GOSPELS (IV/V)

PART IV: “AND TABERNACLED AMONG US: TEMPLE THEMES IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN”

“The Johannine Prologue makes us realize that the Logos is truly eternal, and from eternity is himself God. *God was never without his Logos*. The Word exists before creation. Consequently at the heart of the divine life there is communion, there is absolute gift.”

POPE EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI, VERBUM DOMINI 6

I. TEMPLE THEOLOGY IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

1. A recent essay provides a fitting starting point, and much needed perspective on the study of the Fourth Gospel at present, as it concerns our topic:
 - **Hahn:** “Scholars now generally accept not only that the Temple is a central theme in the Fourth Gospel, but that John is advancing what might be characterized as a ‘*Temple Christology*’—that is, John wishes to show how the Temple and its liturgy find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, especially in his death and resurrection.⁷⁹⁰”
2. However, as Hahn cautions,
 - “... if our interpretation of John stops with that scholarly consensus—that John portrays Jesus as *the fulfillment of the Temple*—we are left with an apparently disconcerting situation; for, since Christ is now ascended, *our Temple must be gone*. And if this is true, the Church’s situation would be not unlike that of Judaism after 70 A.D. and the destruction of the Temple. But John’s Temple Christology is not conceived so narrowly as to limit it to Christ’s immediate person and earthly ministry. Rather, the evangelist insists that *Jesus’ ministry continues in and through the intermediaries of the Spirit and the apostles*.”⁷⁹¹

⁷⁹⁰ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament: Towards a New Perspective on the Gospel of John,” *Letter & Spirit: Temple and Contemplation*, 107-143 (here, 107). The literature is extensive, as he indicates: See, for example, Mary L. Coloe, *God Dwells with Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001); Johannes Frühwald-König, *Tempel und Kult: Ein Beitrag zur Christologie des Johannesevangeliums* [Temple and Cult: A Contribution to the Christology of the Gospel of John], *Biblische Untersuchungen* 27 (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1998); Paul M. Hoskins, *Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple in the Gospel of John*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2006); Alan Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus’ Body: The Temple Theme in the Gospel of John*, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series* 220 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002); Mark Kinzer, “Temple Christology in the Gospel of John,” *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 37:1 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1998): 447-464; Lucius Nereparampil, *Destroy This Temple: An Exegetico-Theological Study on the Meaning of Jesus’ Temple-Logion in Jn 2:19* (Bangalore: Dharmaram, 1978); Gunnar H. Østenstad, *Patterns of Redemption in the Fourth Gospel: An Experiment in Structural Analysis*, *Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity* 38 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1998); Antony Therath, *Jerusalem in the Gospel of John: An Exegetical and Theological Inquiry into Johannine Geography* (New Delhi: Intercultural Publications, 1999); Stephen T. Um, *The Theme of Temple Christology in John’s Gospel*, *Library of New Testament Studies* 312 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2006).

⁷⁹¹ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 107; see: Coloe, *God Dwells with Us*, 216.

3. Following along similar lines as Hahn's essay, in this chapter we will examine temple theology in *John*,⁷⁹² focusing especially on (a) the motif of "glory;" (b) Christ's fulfillment of Jewish temple feasts; and (c) how the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist function for the Christian as the experience of "Christ as the new Temple."⁷⁹³

II. JESUS REVEALS THE 'GLORY OF GOD'

1. **A CRUCIAL THEME IN JOHN'S CHRISTOLOGY.** The recurrent motif of *doxa* (Greek: "glory") is a significant theme throughout *John*.⁷⁹⁴
 - a. It is used far more often than in the Synoptic Gospels, "indicating that the concept is of particular importance for Johannine Christology."⁷⁹⁵
 - b. *John* 1:14 associates "the glory of the Logos" with the "unique glory of Yahweh" of the Old Testament.⁷⁹⁶
 - **1:14** "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; *we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.*"
 - c. Numerous other times, *John* makes clear that Jesus manifests the "glory of God:"
 - **2:11** "This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, *and manifested his glory;* and his disciples believed in him."
 - **8:54, 57** "Jesus answered, '*If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me,* of whom you say that he is your God ... Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; *he saw it and was glad.*'"
 - **11:4-5** "But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness is not unto death; it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by means of it."
 - **12:27-29** "... For this purpose I have come to this hour [see below]. *Father, glorify thy name.*' Then a voice came from heaven, '*I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.*'"
 - **17:1-5** "When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, '*Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee,* since thou hast given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.'"

⁷⁹² As with the previous chapters dealing with the Synoptic Gospels, we will only treat passages in *John* prior to the Passion. Temple theology in (the Last Supper and) the Passion *in all Four Gospels* is the topic of the following chapter.

⁷⁹³ Hahn, "Temple, Sign, and Sacrament," 109.

⁷⁹⁴ "The concept of the glory of God in OT thought offers important background for Johannine use. In the OT there are two important elements in the understanding of the glory of God: it is a *visible* manifestation of His majesty in *acts of power* ... Since Jesus is the incarnate Word of God, he is an embodiment of divine glory (1:14). The two elements of *kābōd* are present in him. He represents the visible divine presence exercising itself in mighty acts." Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (I–XII): Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, vol. 29, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 503.

⁷⁹⁵ J. A. Dennis, "Glory," in: *The Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd ed., 314.

⁷⁹⁶ J. A. Dennis, "Glory," in: *The Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd ed., 314.

I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now, Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made."

- d. Above all, *John* depicts the Passion of Jesus "as the event that reveals both Jesus' glory⁷⁹⁷ and the Father's glory,⁷⁹⁸ so that in Jesus' death *the Father's glorification of the Son* and *the Son's glorification of the Father* are inextricably connected.⁷⁹⁹
2. **JESUS REVEALS THE GLORY OF GOD.** Given this emphasis on "glory," to what end is it employed in *John*?
 - a. We contend that the Evangelist's use of "glory" depicts Jesus as the divine agent of God, who alone "reveals" the glory of God.
 - b. This "revelation of God's glory" is, in some sense, dispensed to all who come into contact with Jesus, for example, John the Baptist, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, those He healed and taught—and even to His adversaries.
 - c. But *above all*, the revelation of God's glory in Jesus is manifest in a special way to His apostles (referred to as "disciples" throughout this Gospel).
 - d. This mystery is unfolded in *John's* Prologue (1:1-18), to which we now turn.
 3. **THE WORD WAS 'WITH GOD.'**
 - a. In the opening stanza of the Prologue, the Evangelist begins not with the genealogy of Jesus, or Infancy narratives—as *Matthew* and *Luke*; nor does he start with Jesus' Baptism—as does *Mark*.
 - b. Instead, he takes us into the heavenly realms. From the outset—"in the beginning" (1:1) he evokes the language of *Genesis*.⁸⁰⁰ For John, the Gospel is a *new genesis, a new creation*. As such, all of our earlier insights on the "temple of creation" should already begin to reverberate.
 - c. "The Gospel begins, as did both the theology and rituals of *the Davidic kingship, in the Holy of Holies.*"⁸⁰¹

⁷⁹⁷ See: *John* 7:39; 11:4; 12:16, 23.

⁷⁹⁸ See: *John* 12:28; 13:31-32.

⁷⁹⁹ J. A. Dennis, "Glory," in: *The Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd. ed., 315. Brown: "The second division [of the Gospel], which narrates what happened from the Thursday evening of the Last Supper until Jesus' appearance to his disciples after the resurrection, has all through it the theme of Jesus' return to his Father (13:1, 14:2, 28, 15:26, 16:7, 28, 17:5, 11, 20:17). This return means *the glorification of Jesus* (13:31, 16:14, 17:1, 5, 24), so that the resurrected Jesus appears to his disciples as Lord and God (20:25, 28)—whence our title '*The Book of Glory*,'" in: *John (I–XII)*, cxxxix.

⁸⁰⁰ Brown, Ben Witherington, Craig Keener and a number of other modern biblical scholars have suggested that the language of *John's* Prologue is very reminiscent of the Jewish wisdom tradition—and should not be overlooked. Such "wisdom Christology" is not new—Origen was one of the first to recognize connections between books like *Sirach* and *Wisdom of Solomon* and the Fourth Gospel. Brown writes: "Wisdom is said to be a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty (*Wisd.* 7:25)—so also Jesus has the Father's glory which he makes manifest to men (1:14, 8:50, 11:4, 17:5, 22, 24). Wisdom is said to be a reflection of the everlasting light of God (*Wisd.* 7:26); and in lighting up the path of men (*Sir.* 50:29), she is to be preferred to any natural light (*Wisd.* 7:10, 29)—in Johannine thought God is light (*I John* 1:5); and Jesus who comes forth from God is the light of the world and of men (*John* 1:4–5, 8:12, 9:5), ultimately destined to replace all natural light (*Rev.* 21:23)" in: *John (I–XII)*, cxxiii.

⁸⁰¹ Margaret Barker, *Temple Theology in John's Gospel* (London: SPCK, 2014), 159.

- d. *John's* opening verse (1:1) goes on to declare: “and the Word was with God.” In the Greek, the precise language of the clause is *kai ho logos en pros ton theon*.
- e. The phrase that interests is *pros ton theon* (“with God”). *What exactly does John mean by this?*
- f. Raymond Brown seems persuaded that the phrase connotes “accompaniment, accord,” that the Logos / Jesus was “with God” in the sense that he was in His company, in happy accord / union, in heaven.⁸⁰²
- g. Yet, Ignace de la Potterie strongly argued for a more nuanced reading, in which *pros ton theon* indicates something more like “towards God,” that is, “in the Father’s presence, or “at the Father’s side.”⁸⁰³
- h. We are persuaded by de la Potterie’s translation—not only because of his textually based (convincing) argument, but because of the very placement of the phrase *at the beginning of the Prologue*. To explain: at *the end of the Prologue*, the Evangelist makes an astounding statement:
- **John 1:18** “No one has ever seen God; the only Son, *who is in the bosom of the Father*, he has made him known.”
- i. In this closing verse of the Prologue, it is clear that the Evangelist is not merely depicting the Logos / Jesus as “with God,” merely in the sense of His being “in God’s company”—but as in the manner which de la Potterie suggests in 1:1, that is, “towards God, in the Father’s presence, at the Father’s side.”
- j. This is precisely how 1:1 should be understood, too—so that the opening and closing lines provide an *experiential framework* for understanding the identity of the Logos, and the *relationship of the Logos with the Father*:
- “The Johannine Prologue makes us realize that the Logos is truly eternal, and from eternity is himself God. *God was never without his Logos*. The Word exists before creation. Consequently at the heart of the divine life there is communion, there is absolute gift.”⁸⁰⁴
- k. Coupling 1:1 and 1:18 together with these insights, *John's* dynamic, relational Logos Christology begins to emerge—and the Christology of the Prologue is *decisive* for understanding the way the Evangelist makes us of “glory” in all that follows in the Gospel. More than that, it bears heavily on understanding *John's temple theology*—all of which justifies our close attention to it.
4. **THE ONE WHO ‘GAZES AT GOD’ NOW ‘GAZES AT HIS APOSTLES.’**
- a. Pope Benedict XVI is correct—‘God was never without his Logos’—and this Logos, the Evangelist explains, has indeed “*seen God*.” This is an extraordinary statement, for Scripture is clear elsewhere—as is the Evangelist here—“*no one has ever seen God*.”⁸⁰⁵
- b. Yet, this takes us into a puzzle: have anyone ever “seen God?”—or not?

⁸⁰² Brown, *John (I–XII)*, 4.

⁸⁰³ Ignace de la Potterie, “L’emploi dynamique de *eis* dans Saint Jean et ses incidences théologiques” [“The dynamic use of *eis* in Saint John and its theological implications”] in *Biblica* 43 (1962) 366–87.

⁸⁰⁴ Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini* [“The Word of the Lord”], Apostolic Exhortation (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2010), 6.

⁸⁰⁵ *Exod.* 33:18, 30 “Moses said, ‘I pray thee, *show me thy glory*’ ... [But God] said, ‘you cannot see my face; *for man shall not see me and live*.’”

- *On the one hand ...* Scripture is clear that God is being itself, yet a non-visible Spirit.⁸⁰⁶ He appeared in various *theophanic* ways in the Old Testament, e.g., to Moses in the “*burning bush*”⁸⁰⁷ and in the form of the “angel of the Lord.”⁸⁰⁸ Moses “*spoke with the Lord*”;⁸⁰⁹ Elijah heard Him in the “*still small voice*,”⁸¹⁰ and Jacob “*wrestled*” with God⁸¹¹—“and after the encounter, named the place *Peni-el*, which means “the face of God.” The last words about Moses in the Pentateuch are that “there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, *whom the LORD knew face to face...*”⁸¹² All of this seems to suggest a tradition in the Old Testament that certain elect figures, i.e., Moses and the prophets did on occasion “see God.”
 - *On the other hand ...* Scripture is equally clear that one not dare look upon God’s countenance—lest he die, for God is “holy, holy, holy.” The high priest, when going into the *holy of Holies* on the Day of Atonement would shield his own face, lest he see God’s countenance over the mercy seat by accident. (He was no doubt helped by massive amounts of incense smoke, flung in every direction!) Even the *Seraphim* “*covered their face*” in the Almighty’s glorious presence.⁸¹³ And again, when Moses prays, “*Show me thy glory*” recall, God does not grant his prayer, but says in response, “*You cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live.*”⁸¹⁴
- c. The only tenable solution to this riddle is this: while God’s special mediators—such as Moses, Jacob, Elijah *came closer than anyone in Israel to ‘seeing God’—they did not actually see Him.* Not really, not ever. *Deuteronomy’s* claim that Moses saw God “face to face” is intended to convey the privileged position of God’s anointed prophet, Moses, who ascended the mountain of God, delivered the Law to His people, and ransomed them from the evil king. Yet, he did not see God face to face.
- d. Returning to *John* 1:1-18, we suggest that the Evangelist is well aware of this “seeing God” dilemma—and constructs his Prologue to communicate that *the issue is settled.* Only the One who was “with God” in the beginning, from all eternity, Jesus, the Logos of God—He and He alone has indeed *seen God.*⁸¹⁵

⁸⁰⁶ *Col.* 1:14 “[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation ...”; *Rom.* 1:20 “Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made;” *I Tim.* 1:17 “To the King of ages, *immortal, invisible*, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

⁸⁰⁷ See: *Exod.* 3:1-6.

⁸⁰⁸ 71x in the Old Testament: *Gen.* 16:7, 9, 10, 11; 22:11; *Num.* 22:22; *Judg.* 2:1, 4; *II Sam.* 24:16; *Tob.* 12:22, etc.

⁸⁰⁹ *Exod.* 6:13, 28; *Lev.* 16:1; *Num.* 1:1; 3:1, etc.

⁸¹⁰ *I Ki.* 19:12.

⁸¹¹ See: *Gen.* 32:22-32.

⁸¹² *Deut.* 34:10.

⁸¹³ See: *Isa.* 6:2.

⁸¹⁴ *Exod.* 33:18, 30.

⁸¹⁵ “St. John implicitly establishes a strong link between the ideas of *sonship* and *knowledge*. It is precisely because Christ is the Son, that He knows the Father, and can *relate what He sees with the Father*; and it is

- e. Not only so, but Jesus’ *sees God* in a *filial* way—as the divine Son. Not Moses, not Jacob, ‘*no one*’ enjoys that divine status, but Jesus alone.
- f. Finally, all of this helps us approach the pinnacle of the Prologue, the Incarnation of the divine Son:
- **1:14** “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; *we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.*”
- g. Several points:
- First, and most importantly, it should not be lost that the passage literally reads, “The Word became flesh and *tabernacled* (Greek: *skeneō*) among us.” Recalling our earlier discussion of *Sir.* 24:8-10, we see that whereas *Sirach* described Wisdom, i.e. “the Law” descending to Zion—John applies this to the Word, Jesus. Jesus is the Law of God in the flesh, Wisdom incarnate—who *tabernacles* among us.
 - Second, the “we” is not all of mankind, but as Brown indicates, the “apostles.”⁸¹⁶ Here, the Evangelist underscoring to his hearers the very essence of his (and the other apostles’) authority. It is as if he is saying, “*The One who from all of eternity has been ‘gazing at God’—God the Son—has in His boundless grace now ‘gazed upon me, John, and the other apostles.’*” For this reason alone—John’s testimony⁸¹⁷ must be taken with the utmost importance.
 - Third and finally, the phrase “have seen” is somewhat debated. Some believe it refers to Christ’s miracles; others to the Transfiguration. Given that both are possible, or even that the “whole span” of Christ’s public ministry is in view, we will leave such possibilities open to interpretation.⁸¹⁸
- h. Second—and this brings our reflection on the Prologue to its conclusion—*why does Moses unexpectedly enter the discussion here?*
- **1:17** “For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

because He alone is the Son (the only-begotten, the only Son) *that He alone can see and know the Father: Himself excepted, no one has ever seen God ...* This primitive text may possibly have run: ‘*He has led into the Father’s bosom, that is to the Kingdom of Heaven, by giving us to be reborn to the divine life.*’ Marie-Emile Boismard, O.P., *Saint John’s Prologue* (Bath, England: Pitman, 1957), 67, 70.

⁸¹⁶ Brown, *John (I–XII)*, 13. “This is a more confined use of the first person, for the “we” is not mankind but the apostolic witnesses, as in the Prologue of I John.” *I John* 1:1-3 “That which was from the beginning, *which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands*, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, *and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you* the eternal life which was with the Father *and was made manifest to us*—that which *we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you*, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

⁸¹⁷ *John* 21:24: “*This is the disciple who is bearing witness to these things*, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true.”

⁸¹⁸ On the view that “we have seen” refers to the Transfiguration, see: Barker, *Temple Theology in John’s Gospel* (London: SPCK, 2014), 173; Boismard holds that it may be either the Transfiguration or Christ’s miracles (*Saint John’s Prologue*, 70). Our own approach—informed by *I John* 1:1-3—is that “we have seen” refers to Jesus’ time with the apostles, in a more expansive sense.

- i. Is this statement out of place? Given all we have said, not at all. To the contrary, the Evangelist introduces Moses to make a startling contrast: *Moses is said to have ‘seen God’—but only the Logos / Jesus, the divine Son, has ‘truly seen God’ and only He is capable of ‘revealing God’ to us.*
- j. In other words, Jesus is *greater than Moses*. Jesus is the New Moses, the True Revealer, the True Law Giver, the True Redeemer. And so it will be in his Gospel:
 - Moses’ first ‘sign’ was turning the water of the Nile into blood.⁸¹⁹ Jesus’ first ‘sign’ was turning water into wine—prefiguring the chalice of the Last Supper—and the holy Eucharist.⁸²⁰
 - Moses built the tabernacle according to the heavenly pattern⁸²¹. Jesus *is* the heavenly pattern, the Temple in the flesh.⁸²²
 - Moses parted the Sea⁸²³—Jesus *walks upon the waves*.⁸²⁴
 - Moses called down the manna from heaven⁸²⁵—Jesus *is* the true Bread from Heaven.⁸²⁶
 - And so on.

5. **CONCLUSION: JESUS’ GLORY-AS TEMPLE THEOLOGY IN JOHN.** Obviously, our above findings are crucial for interpreting *John* 1:1-18—but given that the Prologue is a kind of *overture* of the Gospel, the Evangelist’s intentions appear to be preparatory: all that is said in the Prologue, of Jesus’ ‘*seeing God*’ and as the One greater than Moses, prepares the reader for the revelation of His glory throughout the Gospel—in His ‘signs,’ and above all, as He is “lifted up” on the Cross in His Passion.

III. THE CHRISTOLOGICAL TEMPLE. John wastes no time in developing his temple theology. In chapter 1, there are a number of examples:

1. **BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD’ (1:29, 36).** The lamb was the primary sacrificial animal of the Temple—and was especially associated with *Passover*.⁸²⁷ In John, the expression is delivered by John the Baptist about Jesus, and it is worth noting that this is Jesus’ first appearance in the Gospel.⁸²⁸ Interesting, as Hahn writes,
 - “Although in this way the Evangelist introduces Jesus to the reader as the one who ‘takes away sin,’ there is not a single instance of Jesus *explicitly* forgiving sin in the entire Gospel ... the fact remains that, although Jesus’ mission is

⁸¹⁹ See: *Exod.* 7:20.

⁸²⁰ See: *John* 2:1-11.

⁸²¹ See: *Exod.* 25:9, 40.

⁸²² See: *John* 2:19-22.

⁸²³ See: *Exod.* 14:21-22; see: ch. 15.

⁸²⁴ See: *John* 6:19-21.

⁸²⁵ See: *Exod.* 16:4.

⁸²⁶ See: *John* 6:31-58.

⁸²⁷ See: *Exod.* 12:3, 4, 5, 21; 13:13; *Lev.* 3:7; 4:32, 35; 5:6, 7; 12:6, 8; *Num.* 6:12, 14; 7:15, 21, 27, 33, 39, 45, 51, 63, 75, 81; *II Chron.* 30:15, 17; *Ezra* 6:20; *Ezek.* 46:13; *Mark* 14:12; *Luke* 22:7.

⁸²⁸

announced from the start as the ‘taking away of sin,’ this is never enacted personally by Jesus in the Gospel.”⁸²⁹

- “Rather, the power to forgive is explicitly devolved upon the disciples through the power of the Spirit at the end of the Gospel. The message to early Christians is clear: it is through the apostles that they will experience Jesus’ ministry of “taking away sin.” Significantly, *this was a function performed in the old covenant through sacrifices at the Temple.*”⁸³⁰
2. **‘ASCENDING AND DESCENDING’ (1:51).**⁸³¹
 - Jesus makes a direct reference to Jacob’s dream, of the ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with angels “ascending and descending” upon it.⁸³² Jacob re-names the place *Beth-el*, literally “house of God.”⁸³³ As such, the sanctuary at Bethel was a prefigurement of the tabernacle / temple. Yet, in the context of *John*, Jesus replaces the figures of *angels* with the figure of the Son of Man! The Evangelist could not be clearer—Jesus is the ladder of God, the *Holy of Holies*, the new Temple.
 - St. Ambrose: “Jacob set out and slept—evidence of tranquility of spirit—and saw angels of God ascending and descending. This means he foresaw Christ on earth; the band of angels was descending to Christ and ascending to him, so as to render service to their rightful master in loving service.”⁸³⁴
 3. **‘THE HOLY ONE OF GOD’ (6:69).** Later, in the Bread of Life Discourse, Peter will declare that Jesus is “*the holy one of God.*”⁸³⁵ This phrase was used “exclusively of Aaron in the Bible (*Psa.* 106:16; *Num.* 16:7; *Sir.* 45:6).”⁸³⁶

IV. JESUS’ TEMPLE ACTION (2:13-22).

1. How are we to interpret Jesus’ “cleansing” the Temple?⁸³⁷ First, the conventional approach is to view Jesus’ activity as a “righteous indignation,” along the lines of the Old Testament prophets. This is true—but stops well short of the deeper meaning.
2. Second, Perrin suggests that Jesus’ action is less about just anger, and is rather more “*parabolic*,” a “carefully orchestrated gesture.”⁸³⁸ As such, Jesus’ action has a *twofold* meaning: it is indeed “a prophetic indictment against the regnant temple

⁸²⁹ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 137-38. He notes: “in contrast to the Synoptics, compare *Mark* 2:5).”

⁸³⁰ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 138. See also: Beale, *The Temple and Church’s Mission*, 177.

⁸³¹ *John* 1:51 “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and *the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.*”

⁸³² See: *Gen.* 28:10-17.

⁸³³ *Gen.* 28:17 “How awesome is this place! *This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.*”

⁸³⁴ St. Ambrose, *Jacob and the Happy Life* 2.4.16 87.

⁸³⁵ *John* 6:69.

⁸³⁶ Fletcher-Louis, “Priests and Priesthood,” 702.

⁸³⁷ It is beyond the scope of our study to discuss the “placement” of the passage *at the beginning of the Gospel*, whereas all three Synoptic accounts have it at the end of their respective Gospels. See: Lucius Nereparampil, *Destroy This Temple: An Exegetico-Theological Study on the Meaning of Jesus’ Temple-Logion in Jn 2:19*; Brown, *John (I–XII)*, 113-25.

⁸³⁸ Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 91.

administration” but also indicates “*his own role of (re)builder of the eschatological temple.*”⁸³⁹

- Driving out the merchants and money changers, he rebukes them for making his ‘Father’s house’ a ‘house of trade.’ Jesus’ actions and words here should be understood in light of *Zech.14:21*, which says of the eschatological Temple: ‘*there shall no longer be a trader in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day.*’⁸⁴⁰
- 3. Third, and on an all-too-often overlooked note, Jesus’ action would have brought *chaos* to the normal transactions in the Temple, thereby disrupting the temple sacrifices. If Perrin is correct, the *parabolic* nature of His actions would have spoken louder than words: the sacrifices of *this temple* will one day cease. Soon thereafter, *they did*, in 70 A.D., when the Romans destroyed the temple.
- 4. Fourth, John provides the Christological meaning of the scene to a head:
 - **John 2:20-22** “The Jews then said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?’ *But he spoke of the temple of his body.* When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.”
 - The Evangelist could not be clearer—Jesus spoke of the temple of His own body? John has established that He is the Son of God, the messiah, the One who reveals God ... but how was His body a Temple? His meaning is inexplicable apart from His *sacrificial death* as the Passover lamb of the New Covenant.
- 5. By way of conclusion, Hahn summarizes the passage’s temple significance as follows:
 - “First, by beginning Jesus’ public ministry with the Temple cleansing, John casts his whole ministry in light of the concept *that he is the new Temple*. Second, by calling the destruction and raising of his Temple-body a ‘sign,’ *John establishes a strong link between this narrative and the account of Jesus’ death and resurrection*⁸⁴¹ ... The ‘sign’ of his death and resurrection—the “destruction” and “raising up” of his Temple-body—is the definitive ‘sign’ toward which all the others are ordered: ‘In the context of the *definitive* sign that Jesus speaks about, all the other ‘*signs*’ take on their *significance*.’ Finally, the *proximity of Passover*,⁸⁴² the reference to Jesus’ body, and to the consuming or ‘eating up’ of Jesus⁸⁴³ (*John 2:17*), establish links between this episode and *John 6*, where, on *another Passover*, Jesus will speak of the necessity of eating (*phago*) his flesh and blood.”⁸⁴⁴

⁸³⁹ Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 92. He adds: “There was no room for half-measures. Those who witnessed the temple action would be forced to respond, either to oppose Jesus and all he stood for, or to stand courageously with Him and His movement until the end. But woe, Jesus intimates, to the one who chooses poorly” (p. 113).

⁸⁴⁰ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 112. See: Brown, *John I–XII*, 121.

⁸⁴¹ “This suggests that his death and resurrection should be interpreted as a Temple-(re)building account, while at the same time identifying in advance these events as the climactic “sign” in the sequence of “signs” that help to structure the narrative” (Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 113).

⁸⁴² See: *John 2:13*.

⁸⁴³ See: *John 2:17* “Zeal for thy house will *consume* (Greek: *kataphago*, lit. ‘eat’) me.”

⁸⁴⁴ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 112–113.

V. TRANSFORMING THE TEMPLE FEASTS.

1. INTRODUCTION.

- a. As Hahn explains, “the Temple was *the place of pilgrimage*. Three times a year, all the men of Israel were required to journey to the Temple to celebrate the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.⁸⁴⁵ For Israelites, participating in these feasts meant undergoing water washings (ablutions) to enter a state of ritually purity.⁸⁴⁶ *Only then* were Israelites able to offer sacrifice⁸⁴⁷ and *participate* in the feast, which principally involved *eating*:⁸⁴⁸ usually the meat of the sacrifice,⁸⁴⁹ with bread⁸⁵⁰ and wine,⁸⁵¹ the fruits of the Promised Land.”⁸⁵²
- b. “Moreover, most of the events in *John* take place during the Temple festivals, the succession of which serve to structure much of the narrative: **Passover**,⁸⁵³ an unnamed feast, possibly **Pentecost**;⁸⁵⁴ **Passover again**;⁸⁵⁵ **Tabernacles**;⁸⁵⁶ **Dedication**;⁸⁵⁷ and the **final Passover**.”⁸⁵⁸
- c. It is not possible to engage in a lengthy discussion of Jesus’ each feast; we will highlight the most important elements as they pertain to temple theology.

2. PASSOVER.

- a. As noted, Jesus’ temple action (“cleansing”) occurs at Passover—the first of *three* mentions of consecutive Passover feasts in this Gospel.⁸⁵⁹
- b. “The account of Jesus’ cleansing of the Temple thus announces themes that are unique to *John* and will continue to be emphasized throughout his Gospel—*Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Temple feasts*.”⁸⁶⁰
- c. The second Passover in *John* is the backdrop for the Bread of Life Discourse.⁸⁶¹
- d. Clearly, the theology of the Discourse is *highly eucharistic* and the basis for this is “not confessional but exegetical.”⁸⁶²

⁸⁴⁵ See: *Deut.* 16:1–17.

⁸⁴⁶ See: *Exod.* 19:10–11; *II Chron.* 30:17–20; *Lev.* 11–15; esp. 15:31.

⁸⁴⁷ See: *Deut.* 16:2, 6; *Lev.* 23:8.

⁸⁴⁸ See: *Deut.* 16:3, 7–8; see also *Lev.* 7:11–17; *II Chron.* 30:22; *Isa.* 25:6.

⁸⁴⁹ See: *Deut.* 16:4, 7.

⁸⁵⁰ See: *Deut.* 16:3; *Lev.* 23:6.

⁸⁵¹ See: *Isa.* 25:6; *Luke* 22:18, 20.

⁸⁵² Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 110. See: *Deut.* 16:13.

⁸⁵³ See: *John* 2:13–3:21.

⁸⁵⁴ See: *John* 5:1–47.

⁸⁵⁵ See: *John* 6:1–71.

⁸⁵⁶ See: *John* 7:1–10:21.

⁸⁵⁷ See: *John* 10:22–39.

⁸⁵⁸ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 111. See: *John* 11:55–20:31.

⁸⁵⁹ See: *John* 2:13; 6:4; 11:55+12:1. This signals a three-year ministry according to *John’s* narrative. In contrast, the Synoptic Gospels indicate one Passover: *Matt.* 26:2ff; *Mark* 14:1ff; *Luke* 22:1ff.

⁸⁶⁰ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 111.

⁸⁶¹ See: *John* 6:35–71.

⁸⁶² Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 121.

- First, while John does not include the “Institution” narrative in the Upper Room Discourse (ch. 13-17), the Evangelist’s language “closely parallels, and seems intended to evoke, the narratives of the institution of the Eucharist in the Synoptics and Paul.”⁸⁶³
- Second, there are an array of motifs in the Discourse which are highly evocative of the Institution, including: “the proximity of Passover; the body of Christ *given for* others (sacrificial terminology); the equation of Jesus’ body with bread; the eating of his body and drinking of his blood, and even a reference to Judas’ betrayal.”⁸⁶⁴
- Third, Jewish expectations for the coming messiah included the hope that the “manna”—the supernatural food which God provided for His people on the way to the Promised land, and which ceased once they crossed into the Promised Land, would return when the messiah came:
 - **II Bar. 29:3, 6-8** “And it shall come to pass when all is accomplished that was to come to pass in those parts, that the Messiah shall then begin to be revealed ... And those who have hungered shall rejoice: moreover, also, they shall behold marvels every day. For winds shall go forth from before Me to bring every morning the fragrance of aromatic fruits, and at the close of the day clouds distilling the dew of health. And it shall come to pass at that self-same time that the treasury of manna shall again descend from on high, and they will eat of it in those years, because these are they who have come to the consummation of time.”⁸⁶⁵
- e. Finally, the Bread of Life Discourse is preceded by the *multiplication of the loaves*.⁸⁶⁶ “The sign takes place in the context of the Passover and anticipates, in its very language (*John* 6:11, 23), *the last Passover that Jesus will celebrate with his disciples*. In the aftermath of this great sign, Jesus engages the crowd in a *mystagogical dialogue* attempting to lead them from the ‘fleshly’ understanding of the physical miracle⁸⁶⁷ to the “spiritual” realities of Jesus’ identity,⁸⁶⁸ and to how his presence is *continued in the sacrament of the Church*⁸⁶⁹ through the power of the Spirit.”⁸⁷⁰

⁸⁶³ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 121. “Compare *John* 6:11; *Mark* 14:22, *Luke* 22:19; *I Cor.* 11:23–24, observing the correlation of terms, usually in sequence: “take” (*lambanō*), “bread” (*artos*), “give thanks” (*eucharisteō/eulogeō*), and “gave/distributed” (*didōmi/diadidōmi*). See also Brown, *John I–XII*, 247–248.”

⁸⁶⁴ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 121–122. “Compare *John* 6:51–71 with *Matt.* 26:21–28; *Mark* 14:18–24; *Luke* 22:19–23; *I Cor.* 11:23–24. See also Brown, *John I–XII*, 284–285, 287, 291–293.”

⁸⁶⁵ See Pitre’s helpful discussion of “The Manna of the Messiah” in: *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 77–115. Later, we will return to his insights on “The New Passover,” (pp. 48–76).

⁸⁶⁶ See: *John* 6:1–14.

⁸⁶⁷ *John* 6:26 (“you ate your fill of the loaves ...”)

⁸⁶⁸ *John* 6:35 (“I am the bread of life”).

⁸⁶⁹ *John* 6:56 (“He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me ...”).

⁸⁷⁰ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 124–125. It should be recalled that the final Passover will not be discussed here; the Passion narratives are the subject of the following chapter.

3. TABERNACLES.

- a. The Feast of Tabernacles⁸⁷¹ (7:1-10:21) is interspersed between the second and third (and final) Passovers in *John*. Clearly, while it is the temple feast of Passover that dominates in this Gospel, Tabernacles is also crucial because “it illustrates so clearly *the relationship between the Temple, the signs, and the sacraments in John*.”⁸⁷²
- b. Tabernacles (“Booths,” “Feast of Ingathering”) was an annual originally a *seven-day* autumn feast, celebrated just five days after the Day of Atonement.⁸⁷³ It commemorated the wilderness period, when their ancestors lived in “booths.”
- c. There were two liturgical ceremonies which took place in the Temple at the Feast of Tabernacles.
 - The first was a **water libation ceremony**, in which each day, temple priests would fill a golden pitcher with water from the *Pool of Siloam* and, in a liturgical procession, return to the Temple, and pour it over the altar. Theologically, it recapitulated God’s provision of water in the desert. Prophetically, it was influenced by the Prophet Zechariah’s messianic vision of an eschatological Feast when “living waters”⁸⁷⁴ would flow forth from the time of the triumphant messiah.⁸⁷⁵
 - The second liturgical custom was a **torch lighting ceremony**. Nightly, temple priests would light four massive menorahs in the Court of Women, chanting the *Psalms of Ascent* as they did. The lit menorahs lite up much of the city with their blazing light.
- d. In the time of Jesus, pilgrims lived in booths made of *palm branches*.⁸⁷⁶ Each day there were solemn sacrifices, and in the time of Jesus, an *eighth day was added*, the Great Day of the Feast.⁸⁷⁷ It is precisely then, on the Great Day, and there, in the Temple courts, that Jesus declares two remarkable statements:

⁸⁷¹ “The most joyous of all festive seasons in Israel was that of the ‘Feast of Tabernacles.’ It fell on a time of year when the hearts of the people would naturally be full of thankfulness, gladness, and expectancy.” Edersheim, *The Temple*, 268. See Edersheim’s lengthy and informative discussion of the Feast (pp. 268-87).

⁸⁷² Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 125.

⁸⁷³ See: *Exod.* 34:22-23; *Lev.* 23:43; *Deut.* 16:13-15.

⁸⁷⁴ *Zech.* 14:8. “On that day *living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem*, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter.”

⁸⁷⁵ “See the description in Craig R. Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community*, 2d. ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003), 157-158. Also see: Patai: “The Temple corresponds to the whole world and to the creation of man who is a small world” (in: *Man and Temple*, 105-117, esp. 117.)” (References from: Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 125).

⁸⁷⁶ See: *Lev.* 23:42.

⁸⁷⁷ Edersheim’s description: “It was the last day, that great day of the feast.’ It obtained this name, although it was not one of ‘holy convocation,’ partly because it closed the feast, and partly from the circumstances which procured it in Rabbinical writings the designations of ‘*Day of the Great Hosannah*,’ on account of the sevenfold circuit of the altar with ‘*Hosannah*,’ and ‘*Day of Willows*,’ and ‘*Day of Beating the Branches*,’ because all the leaves were shaken off the willow boughs, and the palm branches beaten in pieces by the side of the altar. It was on that day, after the priest had returned from Siloam with his golden pitcher, and for the last time poured its contents to the base of the altar; after the ‘*Hallel*’ had been sung to the sound of the flute, the people responding and worshipping as the priests three times drew *the threefold blasts from their silver*

- **John 7:37** “On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, ‘*If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.*’”⁸⁷⁸
 - **John 8:12** “Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘*I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*”
- e. As Hahn summarizes,
- It is almost universally recognized that Jesus takes advantage of the symbolism of Tabernacles’ liturgical rituals by applying them to himself in *John 7:38–39* (‘*If anyone thirsts, let him come to me . . .*’) and *John 8:12* (‘*I am the light of the world.*’). To make these claims during the feast itself was tantamount to *declaring himself to be the eschatological Temple*.⁸⁷⁹
- f. Looking to ch. 9, he adds,
- “Both these symbols of Temple fulfillment or replacement—water and light—converge in the ‘sign’ that Jesus performs in healing the man born blind (*John 9*). Here, Jesus declares himself again to be the ‘light of the world,’ and validates that claim *by bringing light to the eyes of a blind man by means of the Temple waters of the Pool of Siloam—the water source for the ceremonies of Tabernacles.*”⁸⁸⁰

trumpets—just when the interest of the people had been raised to its highest pitch, that, from amidst the mass of worshippers, who were waving towards the altar quite a forest of leafy branches as the last words of *Psa.* 108. were chanted—a voice was raised which resounded through the Temple, startled the multitude, and carried fear and hatred to the hearts of their leaders. *It was Jesus, who ‘stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.’ Then by faith in Him should each one truly become like the Pool of Siloam, and from his inmost being ‘rivers of living waters flow’* (in: *The Temple*, 280–281).

⁸⁷⁸ To which the Evangelist adds: “*Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified*” (v. 39). We should add that a similar scene filled with temple ramifications is located in *John 4:4–42*, i.e. Jesus and the Samaritan woman. *John 4:10, 13–14*: “Jesus answered her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you *living water*” and “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” Here, Jesus reaches out to the Samaritan woman, who recognizes that “messiah is coming” (v. 25)—and through her, he reaches to the Samaritans—part of the “lost tribes” of (northern Israel). In the course of the dialogue, they discuss the “proper place of worship.” Her ancestors established an “alternative temple” on “this mountain” (v. 20, i.e., Mt. Gerazim) and not on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. Jesus’ cryptic answer in vv. 23–24 (“The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth”) does not diminish the true sanctuary in Jerusalem. In fact, he declares that “Salvation is from the Jews” (v. 22), a clear reference to the Davidic covenant (and temple). Yet, his response lifts her mind beyond the geography of physical temples to the nature of God, and the reality that His body is the “location” of the new Temple for all of humanity.

⁸⁷⁹ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 126 (emphasis added).

⁸⁸⁰ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 126 (emphasis added).

4. DEDICATION.

- a. Finally, the Evangelist shows how Jesus recapitulates and elevates the Feast of Dedication (“*Hanukah*”),⁸⁸¹ which commemorated the re-dedication of the Temple in the time of the Maccabees.⁸⁸²
- b. The context is again in the Temple; specifically, the Evangelist writes that “Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon.”⁸⁸³
- c. **Keener:** “Jesus declares here, “I am the good shepherd,”⁸⁸⁴ assuming a role “commonly assigned to the Lord himself in earlier Scripture. By contrast, those who have abused him *are not Israel’s rightful leaders* but rather *are predators* (thieves, robbers, wolves) who do not have the sheep’s best interest in view; they resemble the *false shepherds of Israel* as denounced by the prophets ... Ultimately, Jesus’ sheep would include *those scattered beyond the Holy Land*; they would become *one flock with one shepherd* ... This mission ‘beyond Israel’ [was already] prefigured in Jesus’ ministry to the Samaritans, who recognize Him as ‘Savior of the world.’”⁸⁸⁵

5. FINAL REMARKS

- a. We have merely scratched the surface of temple theology in the *Gospel of John*.
- b. We examined the motif of *doxa* (“glory”) and how, in his Prologue, the Evangelist reveals in *new genesis / new creation language*, how the Logos / Jesus, was “with God” in a divine and intimately personal—filial—way. As such, He and only He—and not Moses, Jacob, Elijah, or any Old Testament figure that had an “close encounter with God”—is the One who “sees” God and reveals God to His holy apostles.
- c. Next we look at a number of Christological expressions in *John*. As the “Lamb of God,” Jesus is the new and eternal sacrifice of the New Passover—already in *John* 1, the Evangelist prepares his readers for the revelation of God’s glory, as the Lamb of God and Son of God sheds His blood for the sake of Israel, for the sake of all the world. Jesus’ response to Nathanael recalls Jacob’s ladder at Beth-el, and again, the Evangelist depicts Jesus as the Son of Man, the “house of God” in person, the One in whom angels ascend and descend. Peter’s response to Jesus in the Bread of Life Discourse, “You are the Holy One of God,” takes language reserved for Aaron—and applies it to Jesus, the eternal high priest.
- d. Finally, we examined the major temple feasts in first-century Judaism, and how through them, the Evangelist reveals Jesus as the fulfillment of each one.

⁸⁸¹ See: *John* 10:22-42.

⁸⁸² See: *I Macc.* 4:36-59; *II Macc.* .1-2, 19; 10:1-8. “From then onwards, on the twenty-fifth day of the month of Kislev (November-December) and throughout the following week, all Judea celebrated the anniversary of the dedication of the new altar. It was also known as the “festival of lights” because it was customary to light lamps, a symbol of the Law, and put them in the windows of the houses (cf. *II Macc.* 1:18)” in: *Saint John’s Gospel*, The Navarre Bible (Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press; Scepter Publishers, 2005), 122.

⁸⁸³ *John* 10:23.

⁸⁸⁴ *John* 10:11, 14.

⁸⁸⁵ Craig Keener, “Johannine Theology” (in the article, “John, Gospel of”) in: *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd ed., 419-36 (here, 431-32).

- Jesus “cleanses” the Temple at Passover, a prophetic indication of the demise of the physical temple—and its replacement by “the Temple of His body” (*John 2:21*). Even more, the “cessation of temple sacrifices,” caused by His unexpected actions, prefigures His sacrifice on the Cross, which surpasses and fulfills the meaning of all earlier sacrifices, which, in His death, are rendered obsolete.
 - The Second Passover was the occasion for the Bread of Life Discourse, in which Jesus presents Himself as *the new manna*, the true Bread from Heaven, given for the life of the world. He does this immediately after the *multiplication of the loaves*, along with a number of highly Eucharistic features.
 - Jesus transforms the meaning of Tabernacles—declaring that the “*living water*” of the Spirit will flow out of believers’ hearts—and that He is the “light of the world.” As such, He transforms and elevates the meaning of Tabernacles, filling them with fresh meaning and the hope of eternal life.
 - Finally, at the Dedication, Jesus reveals Himself to be the True Shepherd, recapitulating a traditional image from the Old Testament ascribed to God himself. He is contrasted with the temple leaders, as the “Good Shepherd,” who lays down His life for His sheep—another allusion to His coming Passover. Moreover, the Good Shepherd “unites” His flock in the eternal love of the Father, surpassing Moses, David, and all of the shepherds of Israel’s past and present.
- e. On this last dimension of temple theology in John—that of *Jesus fulfilling the great Jewish feasts*, Hahn summarizes:
- “Indeed, it was through the Temple festivals and liturgy that the people of the Old Covenant experienced the Temple for what it really was—the site of reconciliation and communion with God; thus, they bear an analogy to the sacraments of the New Covenant. In the sacraments of the New Covenant, *we come to the new Temple, the Body of Christ, his Church*. And in the *sacramental liturgy of the new Temple* we experience the healing, life-giving, and reconciliatory reality of dwelling with God, receiving the promise he made to his people from of old.”⁸⁸⁶

⁸⁸⁶ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 143–44 (emphasis added).

THE TEMPLE AND THE FOUR GOSPELS (V/V)

PART V: THE TEMPLE AND THE PASSION OF CHRIST

*“Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah of Israel, takes up and transforms Israel’s Temple and Torah by His saving work, culminating in His Paschal mystery of suffering, death and resurrection.”*⁸⁸⁷

MATTHEW LEVERING

I. INTRODUCTION.

1. Having examined the Gospels over the past four chapters, we have encountered many fascinating dimensions of temple theology.
2. Yet, we have refrained from entering into the Passion—so that it might be treated more fully on its own. This is the purpose of the present chapter, and here, we will include both the Synoptic Gospels and the *Gospel of John* in our discussion.
3. Our task is immense—as we will include the *Resurrection* and *Ascension* as well as the Passion narratives. Moreover, in order to properly understand the meaning of the Cross, we will have to enter into the mystery of the Last Supper.
4. To be clear, we will limit ourselves to only *those aspects that bear directly upon temple theology in some way*. As a result, a number of pathways which may intrigue us, or are worth pursuing as it pertains to the narratives of the Last Supper, Passion and Resurrection will have to be set aside.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CROSS TO TEMPLE THEOLOGY.

1. In a sense, all *of the strands of temple theology* which we have been examining—clear back to our discussion of the “temple of creation” in *Genesis*—right through to the many developments concerning the tabernacle and temple(s) of Israel ... all lead here. They all lead to the Cross—not just to the Gospels, but *through the Gospels* and up to the Cross. Here is why:
 - **Ratzinger:** “The rejection and crucifixion of Jesus means at the same time *the end of this Temple. The era of the Temple is over. A new worship is being introduced, in a Temple not built by human hands.* This Temple is His body, the Risen One, who gathers the peoples and unites them in the sacrament of his body and blood. *He himself is the new Temple of humanity.* The crucifixion of Jesus is at the same time the destruction of the old Temple. With his Resurrection, a new way of worshipping God begins, no longer on this or that mountain, but ‘in spirit and truth’ (*John 4:23*).”⁸⁸⁸
2. **Yves Congar** agrees:
 - “Jesus truly transferred to His own Person the privilege, long held by the Temple, *of being the place where man would find God’s presence and salvation, and the starting point of every form of holiness ...* Christ’s body will be true sanctuary *only by passing through death and resurrection ...* By stating that His body would become this sanctuary by way of condemnation and a glorious resurrection, he also made

⁸⁸⁷ Levering, *Temple and Torah*, 128.

⁸⁸⁸ Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two*, 21–22.

it clear that the one true sanctuary is the *immolated* body ... [Here] we are at *the heart of the whole work of Jesus, the work which His Father had given Him to do*. It is to this that all God's plans leads, it is here that all its strands are gathered together ..."⁸⁸⁹

III. WHAT HAPPENED ON GOOD FRIDAY?

1. **WE BEGIN WITH A QUESTION ...** what happened on Good Friday? If you were a Jewish bystander, near Calvary, what would you say had happened to Jesus, if asked to explain to another passer-by?
 - a. Our tendency would be to answer as twenty-first century Christians—yet a first century Jewish answer would be well different. In fact, it is highly unlikely that any response we can imagine offering would be in anyway similar to the first-century Jew.
 - b. We might use phrases like “sacrificial death,” “His atonement,” or the “grace that flows from the Cross.”
 - c. Yet, a first-century Jew—perhaps even a follower of Jesus, would not offer such a response. Such a person would likely respond as a “shocked” witnesses more Roman cruelty. He or she might tearfully protest His innocence, or of how His mock-trial was hurriedly assembled. A courageous believer might even ascribe Him honor, referring to Him as Lord, perhaps “Son of God” or “Prophet.”
 - d. Yet, the language of “sacrifice” would not dawn on the Jewish bystander. (Nor the Greek.)
 - **Hahn:** “Sacrifice was permitted in only one city, *the holy city of Jerusalem*; yet Jesus was crucified *outside the city walls*. Sacrifice could be offered in only one place in that holy city: *in the altar, on the altar, by a priest of the tribe of Levi*; yet Calvary was a hill far from the Temple, and it had *no altar and no offering priest*.”⁸⁹⁰
 - e. As such, the entire event would have appeared to the observer as a “profane event, a fairly unremarkable Roman execution.”⁸⁹¹
 - f. In the deepest reality, the meaning of Good Friday as a *sacrifice*—which it surely was—is only explicable in light of the Last Supper.
2. **CHRIST, OUR PASCAL LAMB HAS BEEN SACRIFICED.**
 - a. St. Paul explained Christ's death as a “true sacrifice” earlier than written New Testament⁸⁹². In writing to the church at Corinth, he explains:

⁸⁸⁹ Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple*, 138-41.

⁸⁹⁰ Scott Hahn, *Consuming the Word. The New Testament and the Eucharist in the Early Church* (New York: Image, 2013), 24.

⁸⁹¹ Hahn, *Consuming the Word*, 24.

⁸⁹² “The [New Testament] documents weren't complete till the end of the first century; even then they were not called the 'New Testament' till the end of the second century. The documents only gradually took that name ... because of their liturgical proximity to the covenant sacrifice, the Eucharist. They were the *only* books approved to be read in the Eucharistic liturgy, *and they were 'canonized' for that very reason*. Thus, precisely as *liturgical books*, they were called the New Testament.” (Hahn, *Consuming the Word*, 40-41, emphasis added). He adds: “In all of Jesus' sayings, we find *just one instance* when He used the phrase we translate as 'New Testament,' and He used it to describe neither a will nor a book, *but rather a sacramental bond*” (p. 21).

- **I Cor. 5:6-8** “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. *For Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed.* Let us, therefore, celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”
- b. From a Christian perspective, we can rightly say that Paul, illuminated by the Spirit of God, grasped that the Cross was not an “instrument of torture”—but an altar of sacrifice. His words are explicable only in light of the Last Supper. Christ, he says, is our *pascha* (“paschal lamb”)—and has been sacrificed. “Indeed it was Jesus’ action at the Last Supper that *transformed His death from an execution to an offering.*”⁸⁹³
3. **FROM THE OLD—TO THE NEW PASSOVER.**
- a. But we can go further—*much further*. From an ancient Jewish perspective, Paul’s insight was not based solely on the inspiration of the Spirit—as essential as that was. Nor was it based on his being present at the Last Supper—as he was not. Rather, it was Paul’s deep understanding of the “Passover” of the Old Testament Scriptures.
- b. In *Exodus* 12, we find the narrative of the first Passover from Egypt, and with it, the precise instructions for its “perpetual memorial”⁸⁹⁴ from that point forward.
- c. In his book on the topic, Pitre explains the five steps of instruction in the institution of the original Passover⁸⁹⁵—and how Jesus fulfilled this at the Last Supper.⁸⁹⁶
- *Choose an unblemished lamb.*⁸⁹⁷
 - *Sacrifice the lamb.*⁸⁹⁸
 - *Spread the blood of the lamb.*⁸⁹⁹
 - *Eat the lamb.*⁹⁰⁰
 - *Keep the Passover as a ‘Day of Remembrance.’*⁹⁰¹
- d. A one-year old unblemished male lamb was selected, free from all defect. On the fourteenth day of *Nisan* (March / April), on the eve of Passover, the father

⁸⁹³ Hahn, *Consuming the Word*, 41.

⁸⁹⁴ *Exod.* 12:14 “This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; *throughout your generations you shall observe it as an ordinance forever.*”

⁸⁹⁵ Obviously, these customs evolved over time, e.g., the spreading of the blood was done in the original action—but not thereafter. Nevertheless, the basic “pattern” of the Passover was established, and the sacrifice of the Lamb—which was eaten—continued at the time of Jesus.

⁸⁹⁶ Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 51-76.

⁸⁹⁷ *Exod.* 12:1-6. See: Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 51.

⁸⁹⁸ *Exod.* 12:6. See: Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 52-53.

⁸⁹⁹ *Exod.* 12:21-23. See: Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 53-55.

⁹⁰⁰ *Exod.* 12:8-12. See: Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 53-55.

⁹⁰¹ *Exod.* 12:14. See: Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 57-59.

of each household sacrificed the lamb for his household.⁹⁰² Blood was spread upon the doorposts of every Israelite home, with a branch of hyssop.⁹⁰³ This lamb was roasted with unleavened bread—and *eaten*.

- Importantly, “the Passover sacrifice was not complete by the death of the lamb, *but by eating its flesh.*”⁹⁰⁴
- e. Finally, this sacrifice was a “perpetual ordinance,” a “day of remembrance” to be kept forever more.
- f. As Pitre explains, the Passover traditions evolved over time, such that all sacrifice was done in the Temple at the time of Jesus. Importantly though, on the 14 of Nisan, the lambs were sacrificed in the Temple, and that evening, the lamb was consumed by each family.
- g. In on the eve of His crucifixion, Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with His disciples in the Upper Room.⁹⁰⁵
 - **Luke 22:14-20** “And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, *‘I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.’ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, ‘Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.’ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ And likewise the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.’*”

4. TRANSFORMING THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE—AND THE PRIESTHOOD.

- a. As the Catechism explains, this is the definitive moment that links the Last Supper / New Passover with His death on the Cross. Jesus is transforming the Old Passover—into a “new and everlasting covenant.”
- b. As such, he is both the eternal high priest who offers the sacrifice, *and the sacrifice itself*.
- c. Moreover, the Institution of the Eucharist is given specifically to His apostles as a “memorial.” It is their task to “perpetuate it” just as the priests did in the Temple. As such, He institutes a New Priesthood for the New Temple:
 - **Catechism:** “The Eucharist that Christ institutes at that moment will be the memorial of his sacrifice.⁹⁰⁶ Jesus includes the apostles in his own

⁹⁰² Note: Beginning in the age of the Temple, worship was centralized. So, in the time period of Jesus, the sacrificial action was not performed by fathers of households. Rather, it was done by the Levitical priests. Each family would purchase a lamb in Jerusalem and bring it to the priest. See: Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 77-84; Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 61; Josephus, *War*, VI:432-27.

⁹⁰³ See: *John* 19:29.

⁹⁰⁴ Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, 56. This command is stated five times in Scripture.

⁹⁰⁵ See: *Matt.* 26:26-29; *Mark* 14:22-25; *Luke* 22:14-20; see: *John* 13:1-2.

⁹⁰⁶ *I Cor.* 11:23-26 is considered to be the most primitive tradition of the Institution narrative: “²³ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁵ In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant

offering and *bids them perpetuate it*. By doing so, *the Lord institutes his apostles as priests of the New Covenant*: ‘For their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.’⁹⁰⁷

- **Ratzinger**: “In the Christian faith, Jesus is the Torah in person, and hence consecration takes place through union of will and union of being with him. If the disciples’ sanctification in the truth is ultimately about sharing in Jesus’ priestly mission, then we may recognize in these words of John’s Gospel the institution of the priesthood of the Apostles, *the institution of the New Testament priesthood*, which at the deepest level is service to the truth.”⁹⁰⁸
5. **VICARIOUS ATONEMENT**. At the same time, this “new Passover” sacrifice recapitulates the Day of Atonement, in that it accomplishes the “forgiveness of sins” for the sake of the world:
 - **Catechism**: “Christ’s death is both the Paschal sacrifice that accomplishes the definitive redemption of men, through ‘the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,’⁹⁰⁹ and the sacrifice of the New Covenant, which restores man to communion with God by reconciling him to God through the ‘blood of the covenant, which was poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’”⁹¹⁰
 6. In *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, Ratzinger explains how the sacrifices of the Old Testament were not like the pagan religions, with the horror of human sacrifice.⁹¹¹ Even so, Israel’s worship, like other religions with sacrifice, rested on the principle of “representation,” i.e., sacrificial animals or the fruits of harvest represented man.
 7. But how, he asks, does this accomplish “atonement?” Actually, it cannot:
 - **Ratzinger**: “This is *not representation* but *replacement*, and worship with replacements turns out to be *a replacement for worship*. Somehow the real thing is missing.”⁹¹²
 8. This brings us to the Cross as the ultimate “vicarious” atonement for humanity—not mere “representation,” and not “replacement” either, but something—Someone who transforms us through love:
 - **Ratzinger**: “The idea of the sacrifice of the Logos becomes a full reality only in the *Logos incarnatus*, the Word who is made flesh and draws ‘all flesh’ into the glorification of God. When that happens, the Logos is more than just the ‘meaning’ behind and above things. *Now he himself has entered into flesh, has become bodily*. He takes up into himself our sufferings and hopes, all the yearning of creation, and bears it to God. The two themes that *Psalms 51* (sacrifice / prayerful obedience and devotion) could not reconcile, the two themes that

in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

⁹⁰⁷ CCC #611. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 158. See: *John* 17:19.

⁹⁰⁸ Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two*, 90.

⁹⁰⁹ *John* 1:29; cf. 8:34–36; *I Cor.* 5:7; *I Pet.* 1:19.

⁹¹⁰ CCC #613. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 159. See: *Matt.* 26:28; also: *Exod.* 24:8; *Lev.* 16:15–16; *I Cor.* 11:25.

⁹¹¹ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 37.

⁹¹² Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 37.

throughout the Old Testament keep running toward one another, *now really converge*. The Word is no longer just the representation of something else, of what is bodily. In Jesus' self-surrender on the Cross, the *Word is united with the entire reality of human life and suffering. There is no longer a replacement cult*. Now the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus takes us up and leads us into that likeness with God, that transformation into love, which is the only true adoration ... the Eucharist is the meeting point of all the lines that lead from the Old Covenant, indeed from the whole of man's religious history. Here at last is right worship, ever longed for and yet surpassing our powers: adoration 'in spirit and truth.' *The torn curtain of the Temple is the curtain torn between the world and the countenance of God*. In the pierced heart of the Crucified, God's own heart is opened up—here we see who God is and what he is like. Heaven is no longer locked up. God has stepped out of his hiddenness."⁹¹³

9. THE MYSTERY OF THE NEW PASSOVER IN THE EARLY CHURCH.

- a. We began this topic on the Last Supper / New Passover with the question, "What exactly happened on Good Friday." And with St. Paul, the Evangelists, and the words of Jesus himself, we have seen how the deepest meaning of Good Friday was *far beyond* a Roman execution. It was the recapitulation of Passover. The New Covenant was instituted at the Last Supper: and with it, the New Passover, and New Priesthood. We also examined, with help from Ratzinger, how the Cross was not merely another sacrifice, nor was it a mere "representation" or "replacement" like the Old Testament, and, in some sense, pagan religions, too. No—it was a *vicarious, atoning sacrifice*, offered in love, for the salvation of all the world. It truly accomplished the forgiveness of sins—and this ministry was given to the Apostles, the new Priesthood, to continue in Jesus' authority.
- b. So, we would not likely have reached the deepest meaning on our own at the foot of the Cross. Thanks to St. Paul, and to the Evangelists, and the early Church which preserved the "memoirs of the Apostles," the Gospels in the Eucharistic liturgy, we have the fullest possible meaning at our fingertips.
- c. And it did not take long before voices in the early Church meditated on the New Passover of Jesus in just this way. For us, the following may be "a matter of doctrine," but at the time, it was mystagogy, *doctrine in mystery and beauty*:
 - **St. Melito of Sardis:** "*The law is old, but the gospel is new; the type was for a time, but grace is forever*. The sheep was corruptible, but the Lord is incorruptible, who was crushed as a lamb, but who was resurrected as God. For although he was led to sacrifice as a sheep, yet he was not a sheep; and although he was as a lamb without voice, yet indeed he was not a lamb. *The one was the model; the other was found to be the finished product. For God replaced the lamb, and a man the sheep; but in the man was Christ, who contains all things*. For this one, who was led away as a lamb, and who was sacrificed as a sheep, by himself delivered us from servitude to the world as from the land of Egypt, and released us from bondage to the devil as from the hand of Pharaoh, and sealed our souls by his own spirit and the members of our bodies *by his own blood*. This

⁹¹³ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 48-49.

is the one who covered death with shame and who plunged the devil into mourning as Moses did Pharaoh. This is the one who smote lawlessness and deprived injustice of its offspring, as Moses deprived Egypt. This is the one who delivered us from slavery into freedom, *from darkness into light, from death into life, from tyranny into an eternal kingdom, and who made us a new priesthood, and a special people forever. This one is the passover of our salvation.* This is the one who patiently endured many things in many people: This is *the one who was murdered in Abel, and bound as a sacrifice in Isaac, and exiled in Jacob, and sold in Joseph, and exposed in Moses, and sacrificed in the lamb, and hunted down in David, and dishonored in the prophets. This is the one who became human in a virgin, who was hanged on the tree, who was buried in the earth, who was resurrected from among the dead, and who raised mankind up out of the grave below to the heights of heaven.*"⁹¹⁴

IV. MORE TEMPLE THEOLOGY IN THE PASSION NARRATIVE. The above does not exhaust all temple theology from the Passion narratives. The following are some other notable examples of temple theology worth further examination.

1. **'IN PARADISE'—'REVERSING ADAM'S EXPULSION FROM EDEN (LUKE 22:43).**

a. We begin with a mysterious saying of Jesus, to the thief on the Cross:

- **Luke 23:42-43** "He said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' And he said to him, '*Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.*'"⁹¹⁵

b. *How are we to interpret this?*

- i. First, the text should not be treated as though Christ were holding out some utopic vision for the thief, of an "earthly paradise." As John Nolland explains, there is no literary basis or theological precedent for such a reading.⁹¹⁶
- ii. Second, and along these lines, it should be noted that the Vulgate's translation of *Genesis 3:23* translates "garden" (of Eden) as *paradisio*.⁹¹⁷
 - St. Jerome relied upon the Greek Old Testament (LXX) in developing the new text of the Latin Vulgate.
 - The Greek rendering of *Gen. 3:23* does not use the term *képos* ("garden") as other biblical texts do,⁹¹⁸ but alternatively, *paredeisos*—paradise.

⁹¹⁴ St. Melito of Sardis (early 2nd century), *Peri Tou Pascha* ["Concerning the Passover"], 4-5, 67-70.

⁹¹⁵ "In the NT, 'Paradise' is found only here and in 2 Cor 12:4; Rev 2:7." John Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, vol. 35C, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 1152.

⁹¹⁶ "There is no sufficient reason for finding a martyr theology here: though in Jewish thought others may go to a heavenly destiny as a reward for martyrdom (*Wisd. 3:1-9*), the word 'paradise' is not used in this connection, and it is not on the basis of martyrdom that Jesus gains entry to paradise. Furthermore, the criminal is no martyr." Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, vol. 35C, 1152.

⁹¹⁷ *Gen. 3:23* [Vulgate] "*Emisit eum Dominus Deus de paradiso Eden, ut operaretur humum, de qua sumptus est.*" Revised Standard Version: "Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken." See: *Nova Vulgata Bibliorum Sacrorum Editio*, Editio Typica Altera. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1986), 9.

- iii. As a result, it seems clear that the “Bible of Jesus’ day,” the Septuagint, was in the background of Jesus’ expression in *Luke*.
- iv. As Nolland summarizes: “In time this becomes, through reflection on the *Genesis* account, a hope for an eschatological reversal of the expulsion from the garden.”⁹¹⁹
- v. Here, a text from the apocryphal Jewish *Testament of Levi*, commenting on the book of *Leviticus* is instructive:
 - **Testament of Levi 18:10-11:** “And *he shall open the gates of paradise*, and shall remove the threatening sword against Adam. *And he shall give to the saints to eat from the tree of life*, and the spirit of holiness shall be on them.”⁹²⁰
- vi. Some question whether portions such as this from *Testament of Levi* are merely Christian interpolations⁹²¹ or strictly Jewish apocalyptic texts. Regardless, *Testament of Levi* connects the “opening of the gates of Paradise” (Eden) with a *priestly messiah*:
 - **Testament of Levi 18:1-4, 5b-6.** “And after their punishment shall have come from the Lord, the priesthood shall fail. *Then shall the Lord raise up a new priest*. And to him all the words of the Lord shall be revealed; and *he shall execute a righteous judgment upon the earth* for a multitude of days. And *his star shall arise*⁹²² in heaven as of a king. Lighting up the light of knowledge *as the sun the day*, and he shall be magnified in the world. He shall shine forth as the sun on the earth, and shall remove all darkness from under heaven, and *there shall be peace in all the earth ...* And the angels of *the glory of the Presence of the Lord* shall be glad in him. The heavens shall be opened, and from *the temple of glory* shall come upon him sanctification ...”⁹²³
- c. Consistent with such interpretations—and this is a third point about our text in *Luke*—a number of Fathers and Doctors of the Church interpret Christ’s words in a spiritual and non-literal fashion, drawing heavily on the Eden parallel.
- d. For example, Origen explained the saying in an allegorical fashion, reminds of the “*temple gatekeeper*” that God called Adam to be—and, in his “expulsion from the garden—how Adam too was barred access to the Tree of Life in the garden-temple:

⁹¹⁸ See for example: *John* 18:1 or *Luke* 13:19, both of which use the more prevalent term, *képos*.

⁹¹⁹ Nolland, *Luke 18:35–24:53*, vol. 35C, 1152.

⁹²⁰ *Testament of Levi* 18:10-11. In: Robert Henry Charles, ed., *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2004), 315.

⁹²¹ “Christian interpolation:” an earlier (Jewish) text re-edited by Christian believers, in a manner consistent with Christian beliefs about the Risen Jesus.

⁹²² See: *Num.* 24:17 “ ... *A star shall come forth out of Jacob*, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel ...”

⁹²³ Robert Henry Charles, ed., *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2004), 314.

- **Origen** “*Today you will be with me in paradise.*’ Through saying this, [Christ] also gave to all those who believe and confess *access to the entrance that Adam previously had closed by sinning.* Who else could remove “the flaming turning sword which was placed to guard the tree of life” and the gates of paradise? What other sentinel was able to turn the “cherubim” from their incessant vigil, except only he to whom ‘was given all power in heaven and in earth?’ No one else besides him could do these things”⁹²⁴
- e. Similarly, St. John Chrysostom looks to the garden for further clarity of Jesus’ words to the thief:
- **Chrysostom:** “*In the beginning, God shaped man, and man was an image of the Father and the Son. God said, ‘Let us make man to our image and likeness.’ Again, when he wished to bring the thief into Paradise, he immediately spoke the word and brought him in. Christ did not need to pray to do this, although he had kept all people after Adam from entering there. God put there the flaming sword to guard Paradise. By his authority, Christ opened paradise and brought in the thief.*”⁹²⁵
- f. **Aquinas** also looks to the spiritual understanding of “*paradisio*”—
- “Our Lord’s expression is not to be understood of the earthly corporeal paradise, but of a spiritual one, in which all are said to be who enjoy the Divine glory. Accordingly, the thief descended locally into hell with Christ, because it was said to him: *This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise;* still as to reward he was in paradise, because he enjoyed Christ’s Godhead just as the other saints did.”⁹²⁶
- g. Finally, in his discussion of this in his volume of *Jesus of Nazareth* dealing with the scene in *Luke’s Gospel*, Ratzinger adds this:
- **Ratzinger:** “This too is a mysterious saying, but it shows us one thing for certain: Jesus knew he would enter directly into fellowship with the Father—that *the promise of ‘Paradise’ was something he could offer ‘today.’* He knew he was leading mankind back to the Paradise from which it had fallen: into fellowship with God as man’s true salvation. So in the history of Christian devotion, the good thief has become *an image of hope*—an image of the consoling certainty that God’s mercy can reach us even in our final moments, that even after a misspent life, the plea for his gracious favor is not made in vain.”⁹²⁷
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2. **THE TORN VEIL (MATT. 27:51)** “And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.”

⁹²⁴ Origen, *Homilies on Leviticus*, 9.5.

⁹²⁵ St. John Chrysostom, *Against the Anomoeans*, 9.15.

⁹²⁶ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III Q.52 a.4 ad 3–a.5.

⁹²⁷ Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two*, 212–213.

- **Origen:** “Anyone who searches the Scriptures with some diligence will see that there were two curtains, an inner curtain which covered the Holy of Holies and another curtain exterior to either the tabernacle or the temple. These two curtains are figures of the holy tabernacle which the Father prepared from the beginning.⁹²⁸ Of the two curtains, one ‘was torn into two parts from the top all the way to the bottom.’ This happened at the time when Jesus ‘cried out with a loud voice and gave up his spirit.’⁹²⁹ Thereby the divine mystery was revealed that in the Passion of the Lord our Savior the outer curtain was torn from the top, *which represents the beginning of the world*, to the bottom, *representing the end of the world*. Thus by the tearing of the curtain *the mysteries were disclosed*, which with good reason had been hidden until the coming of Christ ... But ‘when the perfect comes’ [*the imperfect will pass away*]⁹³⁰ and the other things which now remain hidden are revealed, then the second curtain may also be removed. *We will then see even the things which were hidden within the second curtain: the true ark of the covenant, the cherubim, the true mercy seat and the storehouse of manna in a golden bowl*, and all these clearly and even things greater than these.⁹³¹ All of this has been revealed through the law of Moses when God said to him, ‘Make everything according to their forms which were shown to you on the mountain.’”⁹³²
- **Congar:** “The rending of the veil signifies in the first place *the end of the former system of worship*. It is, in a sense, the first breach in the Temple whose destruction Jesus foretold.⁹³³ *It is a sign that the Temple is to lose its sacred character, is, we might almost say, to be profaned*. It signifies, in a more positive way ... that *access to the true Holy of Holies is henceforth free*.”⁹³⁴
- **Ratzinger:** “There are two things we learn from this: on the one hand, it becomes apparent that *the era of the old Temple and its sacrifices is over*. In place of symbols and rituals that point ahead to the future, *the reality has now come, the crucified Jesus who reconciles us all with the Father*. At the same time, though, the tearing of the Temple veil means that the pathway to God is now open. *Previously God’s face had been concealed*. Only in a symbolic way could the high priest once a year enter his presence. *Now God himself has removed the veil and revealed himself in the crucified Jesus as the one who loves to the point of death. The pathway to God is open*.”⁹³⁵

⁹²⁸ See: *Exod.* 25:9.

⁹²⁹ *Matt.* 27:50.

⁹³⁰ *I Cor.* 13:10.

⁹³¹ *Heb.* 9:3-5 “Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. *Of these things we cannot now speak in detail*.”

⁹³² Origen, *Commentary on Matthew*, 138. See: *Exod.* 25:9.

⁹³³ See: *Mark* 13:1-37; *Matt.* 24:1-2.

⁹³⁴ Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple*, 142-43.

⁹³⁵ Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two*, 209.

3. **‘THE SEAMLESS ROBE’ (JOHN 19:23-24).** “When the soldiers had crucified Jesus they took his garments and made four parts, one for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was without seam, woven from top to bottom; so they said to one another, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.’ This was to fulfill the scripture, *‘They parted my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.’*”
- a. A brief comparison with the Synoptic Gospels indicates that only John emphasizes this scene. They all mention it, but in passing and with no special emphasis as in John.⁹³⁶
 - b. Nor do the Synoptic Gospels—and this is also significant, quote *Psa. 22:18* as *John* does.⁹³⁷ So, why does *John* expand the Synoptic accounts?
 - **Ratzinger:** “The reference to the *seamless tunic (chiton)* is formulated in this precise way because John evidently wanted to highlight something more than a casual detail. Some exegetes make a connection here with a piece of information provided by Josephus, who points out the high priest’s *chiton* was woven from a single thread.⁹³⁸ Thus we may detect in the Evangelist’s passing reference *an allusion to Jesus’ high-priestly dignity, which John had expounded theologically in the high-priestly prayer of chapter 17.* Not only is this dying man Israel’s true king: *he is also the high priest who accomplishes his high-priestly ministry precisely in this hour of his most extreme dishonor.*”⁹³⁹
 - **St. Augustine:** “That they cast lots for his tunic alone, ‘woven from the top without seam,’ rather than dividing it, demonstrated clearly enough that the visible sacraments, even though they too are the garments of Christ, can still be had by anybody, good or bad. But that sincere and genuine faith, which ‘*works through love*’⁹⁴⁰ to achieve *the integrity of unity*—because ‘the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us’⁹⁴¹—that this faith does not belong to anybody at all but is given by God’s hidden grace as by lot.

⁹³⁶ See: *Matt. 27:35-36 // Mark 15:20; Luke 23:34.*

⁹³⁷ We should point out that *Psa. 22:18* mentions *nothing about this*—so it is not part of the explicit “fulfillment” of Scripture. Why then does John introduce this small element? Clearly, it is of great symbolic / theological significance for *John*.

⁹³⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* III, 7, 4: “The high priest is indeed adorned with the same garments that we have described, without abating one; only over these he puts on a vestment of a blue color. This also is a long robe, reaching to his feet and is tied round with a girdle, embroidered with the same colors and flowers as the former, with a mixture of gold interwoven. To the bottom of which garment are hung fringes, in color like pomegranates, with golden bells, by a curious and beautiful contrivance; so that between two bells hangs a pomegranate, and between two pomegranates a bell. *Now this vesture was not composed of two pieces, nor was it sewed together upon the shoulders and the sides, but it was one long vestment so woven as to have an aperture for the neck; not an oblique one, but parted all along the breast and the back.* A border also was sewed to it, lest the aperture should look too indecently: it was also parted where the hands were to come out.”

⁹³⁹ Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two*, 216–217.

⁹⁴⁰ *Gal. 5:6.*

⁹⁴¹ *Rom. 5:6.*

Thus to Simon, who had baptism but did not have this, Peter could say, ‘You have no lot or part in this faith.’⁹⁴²

4. **‘BLOOD AND WATER’ (JOHN 19:34).** “But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.”
 - a. “Arguably, the first image that this bloody stream from Christ would evoke for a first-century Jew was the brook Kidron, which flowed along the base of the Temple Mount. *The brook was connected to the Temple altar by a guttering system that channeled down the enormous amounts of blood from the thousands of Passover lambs being slaughtered, producing a torrent of bloody water.* At the cross, Jesus has become, in fulfillment of *John 2:19–21*, the new Temple from which flows this river of sacrifice.”⁹⁴³
 - b. The legs of the thieves were broken with a mallet (v. 32). On a *historical* level, that Jesus’ legs are not broken indicates He had already expired. On a *theological* level, this is a direct fulfillment of the *Psalms*:
 - **Psa. 34:20** “He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.”
 - **Augustine:** “The prophecy was fulfilled in our Lord, because as he hung on the cross he expired before the soldiers arrived; they found his body already lifeless, so they had no wish to break his legs; thus the Scripture was fulfilled. But the promise was made to all Christians.”⁹⁴⁴
 - c. Additionally, it is an allusion to *Exodus*:
 - **Exod. 12:46** “In one house shall it be eaten; you shall not carry forth any of the flesh outside the house; *and you shall not break a bone of it.*”
 - d. The Torah was strict that Passover lambs must be unblemished—with no broken bones. Chrysostom sees a prefigurement of Christ, the unblemished Lamb of God:
 - **St. John Chrysostom:** “That well-known prophecy likewise was fulfilled: ‘*Not a bone of him shall you break.*’ For even if this was spoken with reference to the lamb among the Jews, the type preceded for the sake of truth and was, rather, fulfilled in this event. Moreover, that is why the Evangelist cited the prophet ... *He summoned Moses to testify that this not only did not take place by accident but that it had been foretold in writing from of old.*”⁹⁴⁵
 - e. Other Church fathers looked to the story of the Flood, and the Creation of Eve:

⁹⁴² St. Augustine, *Sermon* 218.9. Ratzinger’s interpretation of the seamless tunic includes a second possibility, more of the sort as St. Augustine’s—having to do with the “unity” of the Church. Ratzinger: “The Church Fathers drew out a different aspect in their consideration of this passage: in the seamless garment, which even the soldiers were reluctant to tear, they saw *an image of the indestructible unity of the Church.* The seamless garment is an expression of the unity that Jesus the high priest implored for his followers on the evening before he suffered. *Indeed, Jesus’ priesthood and the unity of his followers are inseparably linked together in the high-priestly prayer.* At the foot of the Cross we hear once more the poignant message that Jesus had held up before us and inscribed on our souls in the prayer that he uttered before setting out on that final journey” (*Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two*, 217). This latter solution is likewise preferred by Ignace de la Potterie, *The Hour of Jesus* (Staten Island: Alba House, 1990), 139–43.

⁹⁴³ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 133.

⁹⁴⁴ St. Augustine, *Exposition of the Psalms* 34.24.

⁹⁴⁵ St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of John* 85.

- **Augustine:** “That blood was shed for the remission of sins, that water tempers the cup of salvation. [It] was prefigured when Noah was commanded to make *a door in the side of the ark, by which the animals that were not to perish by the deluge entered; which animals prefigured the Church.* To [prefigure] *this, the woman was made out of the side of the sleeping man; for this second Adam bowed His head, and slept on the cross, that out of that which came forth, there might be formed a wife for Him. O death, by which the dead are quickened, what can be purer than that blood, what more salutary than that wound!*”⁹⁴⁶
- f. On the creation of Eve, the Catechism adds:
- **Catechism:** “The Church is born primarily of Christ’s total self-giving for our salvation, anticipated in the institution of the Eucharist and fulfilled on the cross. *‘The origin and growth of the Church are symbolized by the blood and water which flowed from the open side of the crucified Jesus.’*⁹⁴⁷ ‘For it was from the side of Christ as he slept the sleep of death upon the cross that there came forth the *‘wondrous sacrament of the whole Church.’*⁹⁴⁸ As Eve was formed from the sleeping Adam’s side, so the Church was *born from the pierced heart of Christ* hanging dead on the cross.”⁹⁴⁹
- g. Likewise, in two different texts—one personal, one papal / magisterial, Ratzinger (Benedict XVI) draws the connection between the sleeping Adam, the creation of Eve—and the Holy Eucharist:
- **Ratzinger:** “In this double outpouring of blood and water, the Fathers saw an image of the two fundamental sacraments—Eucharist and Baptism—which spring forth from the Lord’s pierced side, from his heart. This is the new outpouring that creates the Church and renews mankind. Moreover, the opened side of the Lord asleep on the Cross prompted the Fathers to point to *the creation of Eve from the side of the sleeping Adam*, and so in this outpouring of the sacraments they also recognized the birth of the Church: *the creation of the new woman from the side of the new Adam.*”⁹⁵⁰
 - **Sacramentum Caritatis:** “Through the sacrament of the Eucharist Jesus draws the faithful into his ‘hour;’ he shows us the bond that he willed to establish between himself and us, between his own person and the Church. Indeed, in the sacrifice of the Cross, Christ gave birth to the Church as his Bride and his body. The Fathers of the Church often meditated on the relationship between *Eve’s coming forth from the side of Adam as he slept*⁹⁵¹ and the coming forth of the new Eve, the Church, from

⁹⁴⁶ St. Augustine, *Tractates on John*, CXX. Saint Thomas Aquinas and John Henry Newman, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels, Collected Out of the Works of the Fathers: St. John*, vol. 4 (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1845), 589.

⁹⁴⁷ *Lumen Gentium*, 3.

⁹⁴⁸ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 5.

⁹⁴⁹ CCC# 766. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 201–202. St. Ambrose, *Commentary on Luke*, 2, 85–89.

⁹⁵⁰ Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two*, 226.

⁹⁵¹ See: *Gen.* 2:21–23.

the open side of Christ sleeping in death: *from Christ's pierced side, John recounts, there came forth blood and water, the symbol of the sacraments.*"⁹⁵²

- h. Without question then, the image is infused with both Christological significance and sacramental significance for the early Church:
- "The blood and water is the link between the events narrated and the community of believers of later generations ... When Jesus is no longer a physical presence with them, the community can still be drawn into his filial relationship with God and participate *in the sacrificial gift of his life in their sacraments of baptism and Eucharist.*"⁹⁵³
- i. Finally, this ancient hymn poetically reflects on the mystery of the blood from Christ's side:

*"At the Lamb's high feast we sing
Praise to our victorious King,
Who has washed us in the tide
Flowing from his pierced side.*

*Praise we him whose love divine
Gives the guests his blood for wine,
Gives his body for the feast,
Love the victim, love the priest.*

*Where the Paschal blood is poured,
Death's dark angel sheathes his sword;
Israel's hosts triumphant go
Through the wave that drowns the foe.*

*Christ, the Lamb whose blood was shed,
Paschal victim, Paschal bread;
With sincerity and love
Eat we manna from above.*

*Mighty victim from the sky,
Powers of hell beneath you lie;
Death is conquered in the fight;
You have brought us life and light.
Alleluia!"*⁹⁵⁴

- V. **TEMPLE THEOLOGY IN THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION NARRATIVES.** At first glance, the Resurrection⁹⁵⁵ and Ascension⁹⁵⁶ narratives might not be impacted by temple theology—yet this is not the case. There are some significant connections in the Resurrection narratives, and *Luke's* Ascension narrative, and both are worth our consideration.

⁹⁵² Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Apostolic Exhortation (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007).

⁹⁵³ Coloe, *God Dwells With Us*, 200

⁹⁵⁴ Ambrosian Hymn Writer, Easter Hymn, At the Lamb's High Feast

⁹⁵⁵ *Matt.* 28:1-20; *Mark* 16:9-18; *Luke* 24:-49; *John* 20:1-32; 21:1-25.

⁹⁵⁶ *Luke* 24:50-53.

1. TEMPLE RE-BUILDING: THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

- a. First, in *John's Gospel*, it should be recalled that the Jesus' temple action is placed at the beginning—not the end of the Gospel. Here, the scene concludes with a reference to the Resurrection:
 - **John 2:19-22** “Jesus answered them, ‘*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*’ The Jews then said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?’ But he spoke of the temple of his body. *When therefore he was raised from the dead*, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.”
- b. In this scene, it's important to recognize that the Evangelist cues us in that Jesus' saying about the temple was perplexing in its original context—yet it became sensible *in the light of the Resurrection*.
- c. Moreover, “by calling the destruction and raising of his Temple-body a ‘sign,’ *John establishes a strong link between this narrative and the account of Jesus' death and resurrection. This suggests that his death and resurrection should be interpreted as a Temple-(re)building account ...* The ‘sign’ of his death and resurrection—the ‘*destruction*’ and ‘*raising up*’ of his Temple-body—is the definitive ‘sign’ toward which all the others are ordered: ‘In the context of the *definitive* sign that Jesus speaks about, all the other ‘*signs*’ take on their *significance*’ ... By this great sign, Jesus will replace the stone Temple (with his body, the new Temple), and will fulfill the Passover (himself becoming the ‘Lamb of God.’”⁹⁵⁷

2. THE RESURRECTION AS THE EIGHT DAY OF CREATION.

- a. In earlier chapters, we discussed both the significance of the “temple of creation” as well the number “seven” in the Creation narratives of *Genesis*—especially as it pertains to God's covenant with all creation, and the “sign” of that covenant, the Sabbath.
- b. Turning to the Resurrection narratives—particular that of *John*, it is clear that the New Creation has already begun.⁹⁵⁸ In His glorified Resurrection body, He speaks, cooks breakfast and eats with His disciples.⁹⁵⁹
- c. Moreover, He “breathes” on them—an image reminiscent of *Genesis* 1.⁹⁶⁰
 - **John 20: 21-23** “Jesus said to them again, ‘*Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.*’ And when he had said this, he breathed on

⁹⁵⁷ Hahn, “Temple, Sign, and Sacrament,” 112–113, citing Lingard, *The Problems of Jewish Christians*, 270.

⁹⁵⁸ Beale: “Resurrection is a full-blown new creation notion, since the way the righteous were to enter in and become part of the *new heavens and new earth is through recreating their bodies ...* Christ is the New Adam, or the ‘Son of Man,’ *who has begun to do what the first Adam should have done and to inherit what the first Adam should have, including the glory reflected in God's image ...* Part of Jesus' doing what Adam should have done included *establishing the new temple and extending it obediently*. In reality, he was the beginning of the new temple of the new creation, especially in the new creation” (*The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 175-76). This quote from Beale reveals, as usual, incredible insight on our topic. Where we would go further—much further than Beale, is by taking his last sentence to its conclusion. Through the sacraments, *Jesus is extending the new temple* over the creation, through the Church, and in the hearts of believers.

⁹⁵⁹ See: *John* 21:1-14.

⁹⁶⁰ It should be recalled that *John* begins with the opening words of *Genesis* (“in the beginning”). In the Greek Old Testament (LXX), the first three words of *Genesis* and *John* are identical.

- them, and said to them, ‘*Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.*’”
- “Christ, by virtue of his divine-human constitution and by means of his saving actions, is the center and locus of that redemption. He is the Second Adam who renews our nature in himself, thus inaugurating a new humanity, and breathes his Spirit into us, causing us to be adopted as sons of the Father.”⁹⁶¹
- d. N.T. Wright and Ratzinger “fill out the picture” on the New Creation motif in the light of Christ’s Resurrection:
- **N.T. Wright:** “Where did resurrection show up in what the early Christians habitually did? Briefly and broadly, *they behaved as if they were in some important senses already living in God’s new creation.* They lived as if *the covenant had been renewed, as if the kingdom were in a sense already present,* though, to be sure, future as well ... If challenged about their lifestyle, or their existence as a community, the early Christians responded by telling stories of Jesus, particularly of his triumph over death.”⁹⁶²
 - **Ratzinger:** “Here the new worship is established that brings the Temple sacrifices to an end: God is glorified in word, but in a Word that took flesh in Jesus, a Word that, by means of this body which has now passed through death, is able to draw in the whole man, the whole of mankind—thus heralding *the beginning of the new creation.*”⁹⁶³
- e. Moreover, *John* depicts Christ’s post-Resurrection appearance to the disciples as the second Sunday after the Resurrection—or, the “eighth day.”⁹⁶⁴ A number of early Church fathers seized upon John’s language of the “eighth day”—presumably language common in the early Church, too—and used it liturgically and sacramentally, to talk about the importance of Christian worship on “Sunday,” the new Sabbath, and of the Eucharist, which was the “sign” of the New Covenant.⁹⁶⁵
- **Barnabas:** “After I have given rest to all things, I will make the beginning of *the eighth day, which is the beginning of another world.* It is for

⁹⁶¹ Hahn, *Letter & Spirit*, 236. “This declaration to the disciples must be understood in relation to John 1:29, Jesus’ first appearance in the gospel, where he is hailed by John the Baptist: ‘*Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*’ Although in this way the evangelist introduces Jesus to the reader as the one who “takes away sin,” there is not a single instance of Jesus *explicitly* forgiving sin in the entire Gospel ... The evangelist regards those in sin as spiritually sick, blind, and dead; thus Jesus’ miracles of healing may rightly be seen as *types* of liberation from sin. Nonetheless, the fact remains that, although Jesus’ mission is announced from the start as the ‘*taking away of sin,*’ *this is never enacted personally by Jesus in the Gospel ... Rather, the power to forgive is explicitly devolved upon the disciples through the power of the Spirit at the end of the Gospel.*”

⁹⁶² Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, 578–579.

⁹⁶³ Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 141.

⁹⁶⁴ See: *John* 20:26 “Eight days later, his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said, ‘Peace be with you.’”

⁹⁶⁵ See: Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 375–84.

this reason that *we celebrate on the eighth day, the day on which Jesus also rose from the dead, appeared and ascended into heaven.*⁹⁶⁶

- **Augustine:** “So it was perfectly reasonable that it should have been on *the first, which is also the eighth day—Sunday—that our Lord chose to give us an example in his own flesh of bodily resurrection.* ‘Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; *death no longer has dominion over him.*’ To this exalted state of his *we must go with humility.*”⁹⁶⁷
- **Venerable Bede:** “[Jesus] circumcision clearly set forth an image of the Lord’s resurrection because it too occurred *on the eighth day, that is, on the day after the Sabbath.* And just as the former was wont to release people from the punishable state of everlasting death, *so the latter displayed the perfect newness of immortal life in our Creator, and revealed that it is to be hoped for in us.*”⁹⁶⁸
- **Cyril of Alexandria:** “With good reason, then, are we accustomed to have sacred meetings in churches *on the eighth day.* And, to adopt the language of allegory ... *we indeed close the doors, but Christ still visits us and appears to us all, both invisibly as God and visibly in the body. He allows us to touch his holy flesh and gives it to us. For through the grace of God we are admitted to partake of the blessed Eucharist,* receiving Christ into our hands, to the intent that we may firmly believe that he did in truth raise up the temple of his body.”⁹⁶⁹
- **Daniélou:** “The Day of the Lord is the future age, the eighth day which is beyond the cosmic week ... The whole theology of Sunday is now seen clearly; it is *the cosmic day of creation, the biblical day of circumcision,*⁹⁷⁰ *the evangelical day of Resurrection, the Church’s day of the Eucharistic celebration,* and finally, *the eschatological day of the age to come.*”⁹⁷¹

3. JESUS ASCENDS TO HIS KINGDOM.

- a. Finally, just a few words on the Ascension. The Ascension is treated only briefly in only one of the Gospels—*Luke*—and also in his companion volume, *Acts*. None of the other Gospels include the scene—yet the Ascension of Jesus was, from the beginning days of Christianity, a crucial confession of faith (i.e. Apostle’s Creed).
 - **Luke 24:50-53** “Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned

⁹⁶⁶ *Epistle of Barnabas*, 15.8–9.

⁹⁶⁷ St. Augustine, *Sermon* 260c.5.

⁹⁶⁸ Venerable Bede, *Homilies on the Gospels* 2.20

⁹⁶⁹ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Gospel of John* 12:1.

⁹⁷⁰ Circumcision was normally performed on the “eight day.” See: *Lev.* 12:3. John the Baptist was circumcised on the eighth day (*Luke* 1:59) as was Jesus: “And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb” (*Luke* 2:21).

⁹⁷¹ Daniélou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, 267.

to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple blessing God.”

- **Acts 1:8-11** “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.’ *And when he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’”*
- b. *How is the Ascension informed by temple theology?*
- First, it must be read in accord with what was said above concerning the Resurrection—it follows the Resurrection and is “contingent” upon it, chronologically speaking.
 - Second, notice in *Luke*, following the Ascension, the apostles are “filled with great joy”—and return not merely to Jerusalem, but to the temple, were they “continually bless God.”
 - Given the proximity of the Ascension to the saying about the temple, it seems likely that it is strategic, and may suggest Luke’s interest in showing how the story of the messiah “came full circle,” from the perplexed Zechariah in the temple, in ch. 1, to the “overjoyed apostles” following the Ascension.
- c. Another connection between the Ascension and temple theology is as follows. As noted in our discussion of the Transfiguration, Jesus’ ascent “up the high mountain” parallels the high priest, who “ascends” to the *Holy of Holies* in a cloud of incense. Similarly, Jesus ascends to “His Father’s house” on the clouds. (More will be said about the eternal high priesthood of Jesus in a later chapter.)
- d. Finally, returning to the concept of “messiah,” the Ascension is the fulfillment of “the king coming into His kingdom:”
- **Catechism:** “The *lifting up of Jesus on the cross* signifies and announces his *lifting up by his Ascension into heaven*, and indeed begins it. Jesus Christ, the one priest of the new and eternal Covenant, ‘entered, not into a sanctuary made by human hands . . . but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.’⁹⁷² There Christ permanently exercises his priesthood, for He ‘always lives to make intercession’ for ‘those who draw near to God through him.’ As ‘high priest of the good things to come’ he is the center and the principal actor of the liturgy that honors the Father in heaven.”⁹⁷³
 - “Henceforth Christ is *seated at the right hand of the Father*: “By ‘the Father’s right hand’ we understand the glory and honor of divinity, where he who exists as Son of God before all ages, indeed as God, of one

⁹⁷² See: *Heb.* 9:24.

⁹⁷³ CCC# 662. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 173.

being with the Father, is seated bodily after he became incarnate and his flesh was glorified.”⁹⁷⁴

- “Being seated at the Father’s right hand signifies the inauguration of the Messiah’s kingdom, the fulfillment of the prophet Daniel’s vision concerning the Son of man: *‘To him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.’*⁹⁷⁵ After this event the apostles became witnesses of the ‘kingdom [that] will have no end.’⁹⁷⁶

⁹⁷⁴ CCC# 663. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 173.

⁹⁷⁵ *Dan.* 7:14.

⁹⁷⁶ CCC# 664. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 173.

THE NEW CREATION: THE TEMPLE IN ACTS & THE APOSTLE PAUL

“And day by day, *attending the temple together* and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

A C T S 2 : 4 6 - 4 7

I. INTRODUCTION: TEMPLE THEOLOGY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT BEYOND THE GOSPELS.

1. As we now move beyond the Four Gospels, it must be stated that there is much more temple theology to examine in the remainder of the New Testament—in virtually every book.
2. For our purposes, we will concentrate on temple theology in *Acts* and St. Paul (i.e. the present chapter) and *Hebrews* and *Revelation* (i.e. the next chapter).
3. These books will, like the Gospels themselves, will continue to focus on the person of Christ and portray Him as the new temple, other developments will be seen.
4. Yet, at the same time, we will see the development of other themes:
 - For example, the concept that the Church is the temple of God—and the heart of the believer mirrors, in a more personal way, the “sanctuary” of the new temple that is Christ’s Church, especially in *Acts* and in St. Paul’s letters.
 - Also, we will encounter some of the richest temple imagery yet: for example, *Hebrews* will describe Christ as the “eternal high priest” in *Hebrews*; and the heavenly temple is brought before our eyes in St. John’s *Apocalypse*.

II. TEMPLE THEOLOGY IN THE EARLY CHURCH: THE BOOK OF ACTS

1. **THE UNITY IN THE SPIRIT AT PENTECOST (Acts 2:1-13).**
 - a. The birth of the Church at Pentecost is, fittingly, the beginning of our study:
 - **Acts 2:1-3** “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a *sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind*, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
 - b. The coming Holy Spirit, foretold in the Old Testament, and promised by Jesus to His apostles, has now arrived:
 - **Ezek. 11:19-20** “And I will give them *one heart, and put a new spirit within them*; I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances and obey them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”
 - **Jer. 31:33-34** “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: *I will put my law within them*, and

I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘*Know the LORD,*’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; *for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*”⁹⁷⁷

- **John 14:25** “But *the Counselor, the Holy Spirit*, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”⁹⁷⁸
- c. These promises—are more—came to fruition in the Church of the Apostles, beginning on that day in Jerusalem:
- **Catechism:** “The prophetic texts that directly concern the sending of the Holy Spirit are oracles by which God speaks to the heart of his people in the language of the promise, with the accents of ‘love and fidelity.’ St. Peter will proclaim their fulfillment on the morning of Pentecost.⁹⁷⁹ According to these promises, at the ‘end time’ the Lord’s Spirit will renew the hearts of men, engraving a new law in them. *He will gather and reconcile the scattered and divided peoples; he will transform the first creation, and God will dwell there with men in peace.*”⁹⁸⁰
 - **St. Cyril of Jerusalem:** “And lest people should be ignorant of the greatness of the mighty gift coming down to them, there sounded as it were *a heavenly trumpet*. For suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, signifying the presence of him who was to grant power to people to seize with violence the kingdom of God, that both their eyes might see the fiery tongues and their ears hear the sound. And it filled all the house where they were sitting; for the house became the vessel of the spiritual water; as the disciples sat within, the whole house was filled. *Thus they were entirely baptized according to the promise and invested soul and body with a divine garment of salvation.*”⁹⁸¹

2. A RECAPITULATION OF BABEL.

- a. As the Spirit comes upon the diversity of believers, each one hears—according to his own language:
- **Acts 2:5-12** “Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, *devout men from every nation under heaven*. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying, ‘Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? *Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and*

⁹⁷⁷ See also: *Joel* 3:1-5; *Ezek.* 36:25-38; 37:1-14.

⁹⁷⁸ See: *John* 16:13-14 “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

⁹⁷⁹ See: *Acts* 2:17ff.

⁹⁸⁰ CCC #715. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 189.

⁹⁸¹ St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lecture* 17.15.

Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.’ And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, ‘What does this mean?’”

- b. A key phrase is found in v. 5: “*devout men from every nation under heaven.*” Here, at Pentecost, there is a great diversity—and great faith. This is important, as it is a full *reversal* of Babel in *Genesis*, where there was an original unity—but a lack of faith. Thus, Pentecost recapitulates *the disintegration of humanity*, and the coming of the Spirit brings a new beginning, a new reintegration from the Father:⁹⁸²

- **Catechism:** “This state of division into many nations [at Babel] is at once *cosmic, social, and religious*. It is intended to limit the pride of fallen humanity, united only in its perverse ambition *to forge its own unity* as at Babel.⁹⁸³ But, because of sin, both polytheism and the idolatry of the nation and of its rulers constantly threaten this provisional economy with the perversion of paganism.”⁹⁸⁴
- **Acts 17:27** “And he made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation ...”
- **Wenham:** “And Luke evidently looked on the day of Pentecost when all could understand each other’s speech as a sign of the last days when all who call on the name of the LORD shall be saved (*Acts 2:8–21*). The hopelessness of *man’s plight at Babel is not God’s last word: at least the prophets and NT look forward to a day when sin will be destroyed and perfect unity will be restored among the nations of the world.*”⁹⁸⁵

3. FILLING THE EARTH—GOD’S WAY.

- a. One may ask: all this is fascinating, *but wherein is the temple theology?*
- b. The answer—precisely in recalling one of our first temple motifs from the early chapters of *Genesis*, namely, of Adam (and Eve’s) divine mandate to “extend the temple” across the face of the earth, we see that *at Pentecost, through faith, God succeeds in creating human unity, whilst man on his own had sadly failed.*⁹⁸⁶
- c. Adam failed—and the descendants of Ham failed at Babel, in their broken attempt at a manmade temple, a manmade unity:
- **Ratzinger:** “There is no mistaking the fact that the Pentecost account presents *a counterpart to the story of the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1–9)*. The

⁹⁸² See: *Gen.* 11:1–9.

⁹⁸³ See: *Wisd.* 10:5 “Wisdom also, when the nations in wicked agreement had been confounded, recognized the righteous man and preserved him blameless before God, and kept him strong in the face of his compassion for his child.”

⁹⁸⁴ CCC #57. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 20–21.

⁹⁸⁵ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 246.

⁹⁸⁶ “In the form of tongues ‘*as of fire*,’ the Holy Spirit rests on the disciples on the morning of Pentecost and fills them with himself. The spiritual tradition has retained this symbolism of fire as one of the most expressive images of the Holy Spirit’s actions.” CCC# 696. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 184. See: St. John of the Cross, *The Living Flame of Love*, in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, tr. K. Kavanaugh, OCD, and O. Rodriguez, OCD (Washington DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1979), 577 ff.

prehistory of mankind ends there with the fact that its unity shatters; more precisely, *God himself smashes a false unity in mankind.*⁹⁸⁷

- d. Ratzinger contrasts the two forms of “unity”—of ancient Babel:
- “If we are to grasp correctly the deeper message of the Pentecost story, we must measure precisely the difference between the two sorts of universality. The unity of Babel is uniformity. The men there are only one people and have only one language. The multiplicity intended by the Creator is stifled by a false form of unity. It is a unity that is aligned with power, self-assertion, and “fame”. Men build themselves a way to heaven. In fame they create for themselves their own immortality. They do not need God; rather, they content themselves with their power and their abilities ...”⁹⁸⁸
- e. ... and of the early Church in Jerusalem at Pentecost:
- “The unity of Pentecost is of an entirely different nature: they all hear their own language. It brings about unity in variety. Their unity does not lie in the unity of making or of external know-how; rather, *it lies in being touched from within, in a way that does not extinguish the variety but enriches all instead in a mutual give-and-take.* For now everything belongs to everyone, and for that very reason the gifts of all, the unique endowments that the Creator has given to each one, necessarily prove their worth.”⁹⁸⁹

III. OTHER EXAMPLES OF TEMPLE THEOLOGY IN ACTS.

1. CHRIST AS THE NEW CORNERSTONE.

- **Acts 4:11** “*This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, but which has become the head of the corner.*”
- We have discussed a similar text in the Gospels.⁹⁹⁰
- Here we would only add that in Peter’s speech here in *Acts 4*, it is *Christ’s death* that is focal point, that which makes Him the true cornerstone of the new temple—the temple of the united believers at Pentecost.
- **Venerable Bede:** “The builders were the Jews, *while all the Gentiles remained in the wasteland of idols.* The Jews alone were daily reading the law and the prophets for the building up of the people. As they were building, *they came to the cornerstone*, which embraces two walls—that is, they found in the prophetic Scriptures that Christ, who would bring together in himself two peoples, was to come in the flesh. And, because they preferred to remain in one wall, that is, to be saved alone, they rejected the stone, which was not one-sided but two-sided. *Nevertheless, although they were unwilling, God by himself placed this [stone] at the*

⁹⁸⁷ Joseph Ratzinger, *On the Way to Jesus Christ*, trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 137–138 (emphases added). In addition to a recapitulation of Babel, Beale interprets Pentecost as a recapitulation of the Sinai sanctuary ... and that the ‘tongues of fire’ in turn represent in the Old Testament a “theophany of the heavenly sanctuary” (see: *The Temple in the Church’s Mission*, 204–09).

⁹⁸⁸ Ratzinger, *On the Way to Jesus Christ*, 139.

⁹⁸⁹ Ratzinger, *On the Way to Jesus Christ*, 139.

⁹⁹⁰ See the discussion in a previous chapter (*Matt.* 21:42 // *Mark* 12:10).

chief position in the corner, so that from two Testaments and two peoples there might rise up a building of one and the same faith."⁹⁹¹

2. CHRIST THE NEW TEMPLE—STEPHEN'S SPEECH (ACTS 6:13-14).

- **Acts 7:44-49** "Our fathers had *the tent of witness in the wilderness*, even as he who spoke to Moses directed him to make it, *according to the pattern that he had seen*. Our fathers in turn brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations which God thrust out before our fathers. So it was until the days of David, who found favor in the sight of God and asked leave to find *a habitation for the God of Jacob*. *But it was Solomon who built a house for him*. *Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, 'Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest?'*"
- As Stephen is on trial in the Temple, before the Sanhedrin, he vigorously contrasts the old Temple, the physical Temple, in which they stand—and the true temple of Christ's (now resurrected and ascended) body.
- **Beale:** "The purpose ... is to conclude that 'as Moses was rejected and the people's worship became blasphemous thereby, so with *Christ* rejected, the *Temple worship* becomes blasphemous.' But there is more. Discernible in these verses also is *the hope of a new temple that has arisen in place of the old ...* Stephen's terminology is in line with the rest of the New Testament, were [*'made with hands,' v. 48*] refers to *the old creation* [whereas *'made without hands'*] refers to the *new creation, most specifically to the resurrection state as the beginning of the new creation.*"⁹⁹²

IV. SPOTLIGHT: ST. PAUL, THE TEMPLE-BUILDER

1. SOME BACKGROUND ON ST. PAUL.

- a. Paul was born and raised in Tarsus⁹⁹³ in 8 A.D.,⁹⁹⁴ an important city in the Roman province of Cilicia in southeastern Asia Minor. Prior to Roman rule, Tarsus was a self-governing Greek state.⁹⁹⁵
- b. The influence of Hellenistic education and civilization made the city a center of Greek intellectual culture. Paul himself received a thoroughly classical / Greek education.

⁹⁹¹ Venerable Bede, *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, 4.11. On the use of "the Jews," see CCC 597: "The historical complexity of Jesus' trial is apparent in the Gospel accounts. The personal sin of the participants (Judas, the Sanhedrin, Pilate) is known to God alone. Hence we cannot lay responsibility for the trial on the Jews in Jerusalem as a whole, *despite the outcry of a manipulated crowd and the global reproaches contained in the apostles' calls to conversion after Pentecost*. Jesus himself, in forgiving them on the cross, and Peter in following suit, both accept "the ignorance" of the Jews of Jerusalem and even of their leaders." *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 153–154.

⁹⁹² Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 223. "The Word 'handmade' [*'made with hands'*] (*Acts 7:48*) always refers to idols in the Greek Old Testament and is without exception a *negative reference in the New Testament*" (p. 224, esp. note #43).

⁹⁹³ *Acts* 9:11, 30; 11:25; 21:39; 22:3.

⁹⁹⁴ *Ephesians* was written in 60-62 A.D., making Paul about 52-54 years old when he wrote the epistle.

⁹⁹⁵ The renowned Roman statesman, Cicero, was governor of Tarsus in 50 B.C.

- c. As such, he was immersed in Hellenistic and Roman culture, politics, religion & philosophy—which were all around him from birth.⁹⁹⁶ Yet, to be immersed in it is not the same as saying he embraced it:
- “For Christ did not send me to baptize *but to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.* For the word the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart. *Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.*”⁹⁹⁷
- d. Paul was likewise immersed in the Roman world. He enjoyed Roman citizenship,⁹⁹⁸ and a number of his epistles involve Roman-style rhetoric.⁹⁹⁹ Numerous Pauline expressions were politically charged—and sensible only in the first-century Roman landscape in which he lived and moved and had his being:
- “But if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”¹⁰⁰⁰
 - *Iesus Kyrios* (“Jesus is Lord”) sounds purely religious. Yet, for Paul it was counter-cultural—fighting words. Throughout the Roman empire, all those who said ‘*Kaiseros Kyrios*’ swore allegiance to Caesar and his power.
 - **N T. Wright:** “When Paul said, ‘Jesus is lord’ ... his hearers must have known at once that this meant, ‘So Caesar isn’t.’ And that was the ‘good news’, the euangelion that Paul announced around the world. Was that a subversion of the symbolic world of the empire? How could it not be?”¹⁰⁰¹
- e. Paul was a Pharisee, zealous for God:

⁹⁹⁶ One cannot read *Ephesians*—or any of Paul’s epistles without sensing Greek influence. Yet it was his faith in Christ, undergirded by Jewish beliefs, that drove Paul’s preaching, and persuaded many Jews as well Greeks. E.g. *Acts* 17: 1-4 “Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul went in, as was his custom, and for three weeks he argued with them from the scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, saying, ‘*This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.*’ Some of them were persuaded, and joined Paul and Silas; as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women.”

⁹⁹⁷ *I Cor.* 1:17-21 “For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, *and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.* For the word the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart. *Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?* For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.”

⁹⁹⁸ *Acts* 22:27-29 “So the tribune came and said to [Paul], ‘*Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?*’ And he said, ‘Yes.’ The tribune answered, “I bought this citizenship for a large sum.” Paul said, ‘*But I was born a citizen.*’”

⁹⁹⁹ See below for the styles of rhetoric in *Ephesians*.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Rom.* 10:9-10.

¹⁰⁰¹ N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 384 (emphasis added).

- “...As to the law a Pharisee.”¹⁰⁰²
- f. Paul’s love of Torah and faithful adherence to it guided him to become a leading Pharisee: “I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city [Jerusalem] at the feet of Gamali-el, *educated according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God* as you all are this day.”¹⁰⁰³
- g. Paul’s mentor, Gamali-el, was a philosopher opposed to violence towards / oppression of Jewish heretics.¹⁰⁰⁴
- h. Like his mentor, Paul was a brilliant scholar of Torah. But unlike Gamali-el, he held a fervent, take-no-prisoners approach to Judaism and persecuted “heretical Jews,” including many Christians:¹⁰⁰⁵
 - “You have heard of my former life in Judaism, *how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it*; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.”¹⁰⁰⁶
 - **N.T. Wright:** “Saul may have learned a lot from Gamali-el, but he did not share his particular position.”¹⁰⁰⁷

2. THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL

- a. Meeting the Risen Christ was the game-changer for Saul / Paul:¹⁰⁰⁸
 - “But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, that if he found any belonging to *the Way*, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he journeyed he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him. And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, ‘*Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?*’

And he said, ‘*Who are you, Lord?*’ And he said, ‘*I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting; but rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.*’ Saul arose from the ground ... they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus ... Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias ... But Ananias answered, ‘Lord, I have heard from many ... how much evil he has done to thy saints at Jerusalem ...’

But the Lord said to him, ‘*Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how*

¹⁰⁰² *Phil.* 3:5.

¹⁰⁰³ *Acts* 22:3.

¹⁰⁰⁴ See: *Acts* 5:34-39.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Saul was responsible for the death of the first Christian martyr, Stephen, as recorded in *Acts*: “But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon [Stephen]. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; *and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul*” (*Acts* 7:57-58).

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Gal.* 1:13-14.

¹⁰⁰⁷ N.T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 30.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Though described matter-of-factly in *Acts*, this was the seminal event of his life:

much he must suffer for the sake of my name.’ So Ananias [laid] his hands on him ... And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized, and took food and was strengthened.”¹⁰⁰⁹

b. What did this mean for Paul? Three things:

1. **PAUL WAS CALLED BY CHRIST AS HIS APOSTLE.** His dramatic encounter with Jesus set him apart. The crucified and risen Lord *saved* Paul—and set him on a mission to proclaim the Good News as His chosen apostle. Though not one of the Twelve, Paul’s mission was identical: to proclaim the kingdom of God.
2. **PAUL WAS TOTALLY TRANSFORMED BY CHRIST.** Paul became fully devoted to Jesus, and he was radically changed—in mind and heart. Everything he longed for had met him in the person of Jesus. At the center of his apostolic message was that *a truly transformed life* was now possible through faith in Christ.
 - “St. Paul saw the crucified Christ as the true and living ‘place of expiation,’ of whom the ‘mercy seat’, the kapporeth lost during the Exile, was but a foreshadowing. In him God has now, so to speak, lifted the veil from His face.”¹⁰¹⁰
3. **PAUL WAS CAUGHT UP IN THE GREAT MYSTERY.** He came to see that Christ was the great mystery of God *in the flesh*. Christ himself was “the great reversal”—undoing Adam’s sin through His death on the cross. He recognized that in Jesus, *God definitively revealed His faithful love for all men*. Salvation was now possible—for both Jews *and* Gentiles.

3. PAUL’S ‘NEW PERSPECTIVE:’ WHAT CHANGED AFTER HIS CONVERSION?

- a. Following his dramatic encounter with the risen Christ, Paul became a missionary and evangelist of volcanic intensity ... *but not immediately*:
 - “But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach Him among the Gentiles. I did not confer with [men], nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, *but I went away into Arabia*; and again I returned to Damascus. Then *after three years* I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas [Peter] and remained with him fifteen days.”¹⁰¹¹
- b. What *was* Paul doing in Arabia ... for three years? Meditating on what had happened to Him, now that he was “in Christ.”¹⁰¹²

¹⁰⁰⁹ Acts 9:1-19.

¹⁰¹⁰ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 116.

¹⁰¹¹ Gal. 1:15-18.

¹⁰¹² The phrase “in Christ” (Greek: *en Christō*) is at the very core of Paul’s understanding of the “new identity” in the risen Lord, with whom every believer is now eternally bonded. It occurs eighty times in his letters: *Rom.* 3:24; 6:11, 23; 8:1, 2, 39; 9:1; 12:5; 15:17; 16:3, 7, 9, 10; *I Cor.* 1:2, 4, 40; 3:1, 10, 15, 17; 15:18, 19, 22, 31; 16:24; *II Cor.* 1:21; 2:14; , 17; 5:17, 19; 12:2, 19; *Gal.* 2:4, 16, 17; 3:14, 26, 28; 5:6; *Eph.* 1:1, 3, 9, 12, 20; 2:6, 7, 10, 13; 3:6, 11, 21; 4:32; *Phil.* 1:1, 26; 2:1, 5; 3:3, 9, 14; 4:7, 19, 21; *Col.* 1:2, 4, 28; 2:5; *I Thess.* 2:14; 4:16; 5:18; *I Tim.* 1:14; 3:13; *II Tim.* 1:1, 9, 13; 2:1, 10; 3:12, 15.

- c. Notwithstanding his dramatic conversion to Christ, the roots of Paul's Jewish theology remained intact. His Jewish worldview of Yahweh "*becoming king over all Israel and all creation*" were in no way diminished—but rather, found their true home in Christ.
- d. To his astonishment, Paul came to realize that Israel's hopes and destiny had been summed up and achieved in Jesus the Messiah.
- e. The term(s) "*call / calling*" fit better than "*conversion*," which suggests a "pulling away" from his Jewish roots. Such is not the case.
 - Krister Stendahl agrees that 'conversion' is inadequate—it implies Paul "*changed his religion: the Jew became a Christian.*"¹⁰¹³ As he explains, the 'I' in Paul's letters is "*not the Christian but the Jewish Apostle to the Gentiles.*"¹⁰¹⁴

4. CONCLUSION: 'WOE TO ME IF I DO NOT PREACH THE GOSPEL.'

- a. Previously, 'Saul the Pharisee,' like the Old Testament prophets, expected that at *the end of time*, God would vindicate Israel, restore the Temple, right the world's wrongs—and only then—*usher in the new age of the kingdom of God*.
- b. Now, 'Paul the Christian' came to see that somehow, God *already did this* in Jesus Christ ... not at the end of time, *but in the middle of history*, in Paul's present reality, and for all future time to come, until He comes again.
- c. All of this filled Paul with evangelical zeal:
 - "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!"¹⁰¹⁵
- d. Paul now grasped that the new age of God had definitively begun in Jesus Christ—the New Adam, the "last Adam."¹⁰¹⁶
- e. He understood—and longed to persuade his Jewish contemporaries, that the *new temple* had been "destroyed and raised" in three days—in the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah.¹⁰¹⁷
- f. At the same time, Paul understood that the New Adam was indeed a *temple builder—and had called Paul to help him "fill the earth" with the presence of God*. And so, Paul's gospel was not to the *Jew only—but also, the Greek*:
 - "To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews; to those under the law I became *as one under the law*—though not being myself under the law—that I might win those under the law. *To those outside the law I became as one outside the law*—not being without law toward God but under the law of Christ—that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. *I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some*. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings."¹⁰¹⁸
- g. Paul grasped that through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the New Adam was building his new temple—one that would fill the earth—and that this temple

¹⁰¹³ Krister Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* (Fortress Press, 1976), 11.

¹⁰¹⁴ Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*, 12.

¹⁰¹⁵ *I Cor.* 9:16.

¹⁰¹⁶ See: *I Cor.* 15:45.

¹⁰¹⁷ See: *John* 2:19–21.

¹⁰¹⁸ *I Cor.* 9:20–23.

had a name: *ekklesia*, church, and the New Adam, raised by God in the flesh, was now leading this temple-building mission from glory:

- “I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in *the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth*. Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our religion: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.”¹⁰¹⁹

V. TEMPLE THEOLOGY IN PAUL’S LETTERS¹⁰²⁰

1. CHRIST—THE NEW ADAM.

a. The first point to see is that for Paul, the Risen Jesus *is* the New Adam:

- **Rom. 5:14-17** “Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. *For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many*. And the free gift is not like the effect of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. *If, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.*”

b. For Paul, these two “men”—the first Adam, and the new and definitive Adam, Jesus, all of history—and all of *salvation history* is understood:

- **I Cor. 15:45** “*The first man Adam became a living being*”; *the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.*”

b. Paul’s entire “theology of our resurrection” is based upon this fact: that in Adam we inherit death, but in Jesus, the new, we inherit life, eternal life:

- **I Cor. 15:22** “*For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.*”

a. As the *Catechism* explains, “St. Paul tells us that the human race takes its origin from two men: Adam and Christ... The first man, Adam, he says, became a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving spirit.”¹⁰²¹

- “... *The first Adam was made by the last Adam*, from whom he also received his soul, to give him life... *The second Adam stamped his image on the first Adam when he created him*. That is why he took on himself the role and the name of the first Adam, in order that he might not lose what he had made in his own image. The first Adam, the last Adam: *the first had a beginning, the last knows no end*. The last Adam is indeed the first; as he himself says: “I am the first and the last.”¹⁰²²

¹⁰¹⁹ *I Tim.* 3:14–16.

¹⁰²⁰ It is not possible to discuss every temple-related text in Paul. The following represent some of the more important examples.

¹⁰²¹ CCC #360. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 92.

¹⁰²² CCC #360. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 92.

2. **THE NEW TEMPLE, BUILT ON THE ‘FOUNDATION’ OF THE RISEN CHRIST**
- a. And if Jesus is the New Adam, the He recapitulates Adam’s temple-building role. Yet, where Adam (and later, Israel) ultimately failed in this temple-building, earth-filling role, Jesus, the New Adam has succeeded:
 - **Catechism:** “Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary’s womb because he is the New Adam who inaugurates the new creation ...”
 - b. Yet this work, of *temple-building*, of filling the earth with God’s glorious presence, is *ongoing*.
 - c. The task has been given to Peter and the Twelve¹⁰²³—and, sustained by the Holy Spirit, it has in a sense only begun at Pentecost.
 - d. As such, the Church is the new temple on the ‘foundation’ of the Risen Christ—and its mission was to transform the creation, for the sake of the Son, fulfilling the mission of the Father, in the power of the Spirit.
 - **II Cor. 5:17** “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, *he is a new creation*; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.”
 - e. It should be quickly added that in the preceding text, the “new creation” Paul speaks of is *not apart from the sacramental ministry of the church—but rather, the new creation is bursting into the old creation through the power of the Holy Spirit, and unleashed in the sacraments*:
 - **I Cor. 5:19–21** “... *in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation*. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, *be reconciled to God*. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”¹⁰²⁴
 - f. For Paul, this *really was Good News*—for him for “his” churches, indeed for all of humanity—and Paul became preoccupied with its urgent proclamation to Jew and Gentile alike.
 - **I Cor. 5: 10–12** “According to the grace of God given to me, like a *skilled master builder* [Greek: *sophos architekton*] I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”¹⁰²⁵

¹⁰²³ See: *Matt.* 28:18–20.

¹⁰²⁴ “The apostles and their successors carry out this ‘*ministry of reconciliation*,’ not only by announcing to men God’s forgiveness merited for us by Christ, and calling them to conversion and faith; *but also by communicating to them the forgiveness of sins in Baptism, and reconciling them with God and with the Church through the power of the keys, received from Christ.*” CCC #981. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 256. “In imparting to his apostles his own power to forgive sins the Lord also gives them the authority to reconcile sinners with the Church. This ecclesial dimension of their task is expressed most notably in Christ’s solemn words to Simon Peter: “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (CCC #1444; See: *Matt.* 16:19; *Matt.* 18:18; 28:16–20; *John* 20:19–23).

¹⁰²⁵ *I Cor.* 3:10–12.

- g. Paul had been admonishing the Corinthians with an image of a “vineyard”¹⁰²⁶, but several verses later, his metaphor shifts—not just to a building, but to the temple. This seems like an unnatural shift - *why?* As Beale suggests,
- “The shift from the agricultural metaphor ... to a temple may be viewed to be more natural in the light of our prior study that *the Garden of Eden, Israel’s garden-like promises land, and Israel’s future restoration in a garden-like land were either equated or associated with a temple.*”¹⁰²⁷
- h. “Paul identifies the ‘*foundation*’ of the new temple to be Jesus Christ. Paul ‘laid’ this ‘*foundation*’ among the Corinthians when they first believed, and now Apollos and others are ‘*building upon it.*’”¹⁰²⁸ Moreover, following the temple metaphor, Paul draws on imagery used in the Old Testament formerly associated with the building of Solomon’s Temple:
- **I Chron. 29:2** “So I have provided for *the house of my God*, so far as I was able, the *gold* for the things of *gold*, the *silver* for the things of *silver*, and the *bronze* for the things of *bronze*, the *iron* for the things of *iron*, and *wood* for the things of *wood*, besides great quantities of *onyx* and *stones* for setting, *antimony, colored stones, all sorts of precious stones, and marble.*”¹⁰²⁹
 - **I Cor. 3:12** “Now if any one builds on the foundation with *gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw ...*”
- i. There is no doubt that for Paul, the church at Corinth is the new temple of God, with Christ as its foundation:
- **I Cor. 3:16-17** “Do you not know that *you are God’s temple* and that God’s Spirit *dwells* in you? If anyone destroys *God’s temple*, God will destroy him. For *God’s temple is holy, and that temple you are.*”¹⁰³⁰
- j. St. Cyprian, the martyred bishop of Carthage writes,
- “Let those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ submit to the rule of our Redeemer with the absolute obedience of servants. Let us take care not to bring anything unclean or defiled *into the temple of God*, lest He be offended and *leave the abode where He dwells.*”¹⁰³¹

¹⁰²⁶ See: *I Cor. 5:9*.

¹⁰²⁷ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 246. Fitzmyer agrees: “The phrase, ‘God’s temple,’ is an OT term found in Dan 5:3 ... and *Judith 4:2* for the actual Temple in Jerusalem, but *Paul uses it now in a metaphorical sense*, which does not imply any antagonism for the Jerusalem Temple. The Christian congregation is *no longer just a building belonging to God (3:9)*, but is *God’s very dwelling place, ‘the temple of God,’ the place where God’s presence with Christians is to be found.* Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 32, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 202.

¹⁰²⁸ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 249.

¹⁰²⁹ “The only other place in Scripture where a ‘*foundation*’ of a building is laid and ‘*gold*,’ ‘*silver*,’ and ‘*precious stones*’ are ‘*built*’ upon the foundation is Solomon’s temple.” Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 247. See: *I Ki.5:17; 6:20-21, 28, 30, 35; I Chron. 22:16; 29:2-7.*

¹⁰³⁰ “Three times [Paul] calls the Corinthians ‘the temple of God.’ (Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 250. Additionally, Beale suggests *Mal. Chs. 3-4*, which speaks of silver, gold, etc. being purified in a “furnace” appears to be behind the text.

¹⁰³¹ St. Cyprian of Carthage, *The Dress of Virgins*, 2.

3. THE END-TIME TEMPLE IS HERE.

- a. In the above text, Paul urges the church at Corinth to see themselves as they are—the new temple built upon the foundation of Christ. In his second epistle to the church, we find yet another example of temple theology—and in this reference, he describes the church as an end-times temple:
 - **II Cor. 6:16-18** “What agreement has *the temple of God* with idols? For *we are the temple of the living God*; as God said, ‘*I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”
- b. Several temple-related texts from the Old Testament underlie Paul’s metaphor:¹⁰³²
 - **Lev. 26:11-12** “And I will make my abode among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people.”
 - **Ezek. 37:26-28** “*I will make a covenant of peace with them*; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, and will *set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My dwelling place shall be with them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that *I the LORD sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary is in the midst of them for evermore.*”
- c. Notice that in the first text, Paul draws upon God’s covenant with Moses and Israel, expressed in the temple language of *Leviticus*. What is important to see is that for Paul, as in *Leviticus*, the charge to God’s people is to “holy worship”—and turning away from idolatry. This temptation to turn away to other gods, a perennial problem for Israel, was similarly a problem for Paul’s Corinth.
- d. In the second text, which Paul draws from *Ezekiel*, temple language is clear. Recalling the “future temple vision” context from *Ezekiel*, Paul’s message now becomes clear: *in the age of the New Covenant, the Church is the fulfillment of the Old Testament hopes for a coming new temple.* For Paul, the Father has accomplished—in Christ—the beginning of his *eschatological sanctuary in the midst of them, ‘for evermore.’*
 - “Paul is not merely making an analogy between a *temple idea* and that of Christians [rather, Paul is saying] that Christians *are* the beginning fulfillment of the actual prophecy of the end-time temple.”¹⁰³³
 - **Ambrosiaster**: “No one can serve two masters. Christ has proclaimed that we should go away from the devil, who wants to represent himself falsely as God. He has promised us eternal life, so we should be strangers to the treachery and wrong-headedness of unbelievers. *He has forbidden the worship of idols because they are incompatible with the temple of God. We are temples of the living God.* There is nothing more damaging to us than

¹⁰³² Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 254–56.

¹⁰³³ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 254.

idols, because they tempt us to depart from our faith in the one true God.”¹⁰³⁴

4. GROWING INTO THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD.

- a. Our next example of temple theology in Paul is also “one of the most explicit descriptions of the Church as the temple in all of the New Testament.”¹⁰³⁵
 - **Eph. 2:19-23** “So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, *built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets*, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”
- b. Here, once again, Paul emphasizes this new development beyond the Gospels, which primarily¹⁰³⁶ present *Jesus as the Temple*; the Apostle presents *the Church as the temple*—the temple built upon the foundation stone of Christ.
- c. Notice the importance of the “apostles” (and prophets) in the text; for Paul, there is no space, no distance whatsoever between the “*foundation*” of the new temple, which is the Apostles—and the “*foundation stone*,” which is Christ.
- d. In sum: *the foundation fills out the structure of the temple, of which the foundation stone is the sure basis of everything.*
- e. With the Apostles as the foundation of the Temple—Peter, the apostle to the Jews and Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, all of the Church is “built together” upon the true cornerstone, Christ—and it is thereby *united as one*:
- f. **St. Jerome:** “This cornerstone joins together both walls *and restores two peoples to unity*, concerning which God said through Isaiah: ‘Behold, I will lay a cornerstone in Zion as its foundation, elect and precious; the one who believes in it will not be ashamed.’ It was His will to build further upon this cornerstone and other cornerstones, so that the apostle Paul would be able to say boldly, ‘*built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, with Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.*’”¹⁰³⁷

5. THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- a. What all of the above Pauline texts share in common is that the basic understanding of that *the Church, not Christ, is, strictly speaking, the new temple.*
- b. Does this development contradict or diminish the affirmation of the Gospels, that *Jesus is the new temple?*
- c. No—to the contrary, as we saw, Paul actually *underscores* the theology of the Gospels. By describing Christ as *the cornerstone of the temple*, upon which (along with His holy Apostles) the new temple of the Church is built, Paul has *applied* the theology of the Gospels, and in so doing, “built” upon it, so to speak, extending the imagery to its ecclesiological conclusion. Just as the head is

¹⁰³⁴ Ambrosiaster (circa 366–384 A.D), *Commentary on Paul’s Epistles*. ‘Ambrosiaster’ is the name given to an anonymous Pauline commentator, once thought to have been composed by St. Ambrose.

¹⁰³⁵ Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 259.

¹⁰³⁶ But recall: *Matt. 21:42* “Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘*The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner*; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?’”

¹⁰³⁷ St. Jerome, *Commentary on Zechariah 3.14.10–11*.

united to the members, the body,¹⁰³⁸ so is Christ, the cornerstone *united* to His temple, His Church.

- d. Now, with this trajectory of temple theology in Paul clear in our minds, we now turn to one final example.
- e. Here we will again encounter a new understanding of the temple, a fresh way of applying the temple theology of the Old Testament. And it is precisely this: not only is *the church* the new temple, but with this and from this, Paul will add that *each member of the church*, by virtue of their Baptism, and being ‘in Christ,’ is now individually a “temple of the Holy Spirit.”
 - **I Cor. 6:19** “Do you not know that *your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit* within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”
- f. As **Fitzmyer** explains,
 - “In [I Cor.] 3:16, Paul called the Christian community of Corinth ‘*the temple of God*’ and said that ‘the Spirit of God’ *dwelt in it*, but now he teaches something very similar about *the individual Christian and his or her body*. Thus Paul affirms not only the corporate, but also the individual sense of the indwelling Spirit of God.”¹⁰³⁹
- g. The Catechism explains the import of this in Christian theology:
 - “The Holy Spirit is ‘*the principle of every vital and truly saving action in each part of the Body.*’ He works in many ways to build up the whole Body in charity:¹⁰⁴⁰ by God’s Word ‘*which is able to build you up*’;¹⁰⁴¹ by Baptism, through which he forms Christ’s Body;¹⁰⁴² *by the sacraments*, which give growth and healing to Christ’s members; *by ‘the grace of the apostles, which holds first place among his gifts*’;¹⁰⁴³ by the *virtues*, which make us act according to what is good; finally, by the *many special graces* (called ‘*charisms*’), by which he makes the *faithful ‘fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church.*”¹⁰⁴⁴
- h. In the middle of the twentieth century, Pope Pius XII drew upon Paul’s image to encourage a new purity among young adults:
 - “For modesty foresees threatening danger, forbids us to expose ourselves to risks, demands the avoidance of those occasions which the imprudent do not shun. It does not like impure or loose talk, it shrinks from the slightest immodesty, it carefully avoids suspect familiarity with persons of the other sex, since it brings the soul to show due reverence to the body, as being a member of Christ and *the temple of the Holy Spirit*. He who possesses the treasure of Christian modesty abominates every sin of

¹⁰³⁸ See: *Eph.* 5:23; *Col.* 1:23; 2:18-19.

¹⁰³⁹ Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 269–270.

¹⁰⁴⁰ See: *Eph.* 4:16.

¹⁰⁴¹ See: *Acts* 20:32.

¹⁰⁴² See: *I Cor.* 12:13.

¹⁰⁴³ Citing *Lumen Gentium* 7 § 2.

¹⁰⁴⁴ CCC #798. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 212.

impurity and instantly flees whenever he is tempted by its seductions.”¹⁰⁴⁵

- i. More recently, Saint Pope John Paul II applied St. Paul’s teaching to those called to the *vocation of marriage* as well as to those called to the priesthood or religious life:
 - Through what we discover in a clear-sighted reading of 1 Corinthians ... we discover the whole realism of the Pauline theology of the body. While the Apostle proclaims in the letter that “your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you” (*I Cor.* 6:19), he is at the same time fully aware of the weakness and sinfulness to which man is subject precisely by reason of the concupiscence of the flesh ... In fact, in one as well as the other way of living—today we would say, in one as well as the other vocation—the “gift” is at work that each one receives from God, that is, *grace, which brings it about that the body is ‘a temple of the Holy Spirit’ and remains such in virginity (continence) as well as in marriage, if man remains faithful to his own gift and, in conformity with his state or vocation, does not ‘dishonor’ the ‘temple of the Holy Spirit,’ which is his body.*”¹⁰⁴⁶

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS.

- a. In the book of *Acts* and in St. Paul, we witness the development of temple theology beyond the Four Gospels. Like the Gospels, these New Testament texts take up the importance of the temple from the Old Testament, from the life of Israel—and show its fulfillment in light of the life, death, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ.
- b. At the same time, Paul’s letters, along with *Acts*, bring out new dimensions of temple theology not realized in the Gospels—especially, that the Church is the continuing presence of Christ on the earth, and, inasmuch as it has the Apostles as its foundation, rests upon the true cornerstone, which is Christ Himself.
- c. This image of the Church as the new temple is profoundly important, not only for understanding the message of the New Testament, but also in terms of ecclesiology, the nature of the sacramental life of the Church, Christian morality, Christian hope, and much more.
- d. Finally, added to the image of the *Church as the new temple* is the body of the individual, baptized believer: each Christian is called to be a “little sanctuary” within the larger temple of the Church.

With this, we bring our study of temple theology in *Acts* and in St. Paul to a close—and turn to our final chapter on the New Testament, specifically on *Hebrews* and *Revelation*.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Pope Pius XVII, *Sacra Virginitas*. Encyclical on Consecrated Virginity, March 25, 1954.

¹⁰⁴⁶ St. Pope John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. Michael Waldstein (Boston, MA: Pauline Books & Media, 2006), 455 [TOB 85.2], emphases added.

THE ETERNAL PRIEST, THE HEAVENLY TEMPLE

THE TEMPLE IN HEBREWS & REVELATION

“The new Temple, not made by human hands, *does exist, but it is also still under construction*. The great gesture of embrace emanating from the Crucified *has not yet reached its goal; it has only just begun*. Christian liturgy is liturgy on the way, a liturgy of pilgrimage toward the transfiguration of the world, which will only take place when God is ‘all in all.’”¹⁰⁴⁷

CARDINAL JOSEPH RATZINGER,
THE SPIRIT OF THE LITURGY

I. INTRODUCTION.

1. Having begun our study with the first book of the Old Testament, in this chapter, we now conclude our biblical reflections with the final book of the New Testament.
2. Specifically, in this chapter, we will concentrate on the temple theology of two final books of the New Testament. Here, we will encounter:
 - a. Christ, the “eternal” high priest in the book of *Hebrews*; and
 - b. The heavenly temple of the new creation in the book of *Revelation*.

II. THE BOOK OF HEBREWS: JESUS, THE ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST

1. First, a few introductory, contextual remarks are necessary:¹⁰⁴⁸
 - a. *Hebrews* begins by contrasting the past with the author’s present:
 - **Heb. 1:1-2** “In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
 - b. Here, all of the periods of the past—from Creation through Moses and David, up to the birth of Christ, were various ways of “God speaking.” But now, the author declares, God has definitively “spoken to us by a Son.”¹⁰⁴⁹

¹⁰⁴⁷ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 50.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Among the best modern introductions to *Hebrews*, see: (1) Ceslas Spicq, *C. L’Épître aux Hébreux* [*The Epistle to the Hebrews*], 2 vols. *Études bibliques* [“Biblical Studies”], Paris: Gabalda, 1952–53; (2) Albert Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest*. J. Bernard Orchard, trans. (Petersham: MA: St. Bede’s), especially pp. 91–238; and (3) Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews: a New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 36, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 200). Additionally, see: Harold Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989); William L. Lane, *Hebrews*. 2 vols. Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, 1991); Andre Feuillet, “Le ‘commencement’ de l’économie chrétienne d’après He ii.3–4; Mc i.1 et Ac i.1–2 [“The ‘beginning’ of the Christian dispensation from ii.3 He-4; I.1 Mc and Ac i.1–2”] in: *New Testament Studies*, 24 (1977–78): 163–74.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Vanhoye suggests that the *Epistle* is sub-divided into three larger sections: *Heb.* 1:1–4:16, where one “looks in vain for the slightest allusion to the priesthood;” and *Heb.* 5:1–10:18, the central section of the epistle, which unfolds “the priesthood of Christ.” Although Vanhoye does not treat the remainder of the epistle in such an extended way, the third section is *Heb.* 10:19–13:25, in which the New Covenant of the New

- c. In chapters 1-2, Christ is shown as “*superior to the angels:*” Christ is both above them in sovereignty by virtue of being “*lower than the angels,*”¹⁰⁵⁰ i.e., in His incarnation, by which He perfects the Old Covenant God made with Israel, so that with Israel, all of the Gentiles—in other words, all the sons of Adam—may be saved.
- d. In chapter 5, the *Epistle* asserts that Christ is our high priest, “*just as Aaron was,*”¹⁰⁵¹ yet to Christ alone—and no other high priest, has God ever said, “*Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.*”¹⁰⁵²
- e. This phrase, “*after the order of Melchizedek,*” which occurs five times in *Hebrews*,¹⁰⁵³ is crucial to understanding the entire letter:
- As we saw in a previous chapter, Genesis links the mysterious Melchizedek with the pre-Levitical “patriarchal” priesthood, in the epoch of the natural, father-son priesthood.
 - Melchizedek is identified as the righteous “priest-king” of Salem (an alternative / earlier term for Jerusalem), who brings “bread and wine” to Abram’s (i.e. Abraham’s), to sacrifice to Abram’s God.
- f. For the author of *Hebrews*, Jesus is, like Melchizedek, both king and high priest. As such, Melchizedek’s ministry in Salem prefigures Jesus’ ministry in the “heavenly Jerusalem” later in the epistle:
- **Heb. 12:22** “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, *the heavenly Jerusalem*, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering ...”
- g. Before going further, we pause—and remind ourselves that it was Israel’s *apostasy*—the catastrophe of the Golden Calf incident¹⁰⁵⁴ which brought about “*a change in the priesthood*”¹⁰⁵⁵ from the earlier father-son model to the Levitical priesthood.
- h. This fact is very significant to the author of *Hebrews*, who reaches back, before the institution of the Levitical priesthood, to the earlier “primordial” priesthood, of who the mysterious Melchizedek is the archetype.
- i. Here, *Hebrews* makes an extraordinary claim, and which is vital to our study:
- **Heb. 7:11-14** “Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), *what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron?* For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. *For it is evident that*

Priesthood is developed, along with an encouragement to faith and perseverance. See: Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest*, 90-94.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Heb.* 2:7, 9.

¹⁰⁵¹ *Heb.* 5:4.

¹⁰⁵² *Heb.* 5:6.

¹⁰⁵³ *Heb.* 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 17.

¹⁰⁵⁴ See: *Gen.* 32.

¹⁰⁵⁵ *Heb.* 7:12.

our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.”

- j. The “change in the priesthood” to which *Hebrews* refers, is foretold in *Psa.* 110 which ascribes the *Melchizedekian* priesthood to David:
- **Psa. 110:4** “*The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.’*”
- k. To be clear, it is *first David* who is described as *a priest in the order of Melchizedek*. This is the only explanation of how David—of the tribe of Judah—could have legitimately offered “sacrifices” to the Lord—actions which the Levitical priests—and *only the Levitical priests* may do.¹⁰⁵⁶
- l. Jesus—like David—is of the “tribe of Judah” and, according to the Levitical order, “disqualified” to offer priestly sacrifices.¹⁰⁵⁷
- m. *Hebrews* then explains that the Levitical priesthood was not established by a “divine oath.”¹⁰⁵⁸—yet the priesthood of Melchizedek *was established with an oath*, referring to *Psa.* 110. As such, *Hebrews* explains, “This makes Jesus the surety [ESV: “guarantor”]¹⁰⁵⁹ of a better covenant.”
- n. What does the author of *Hebrews* mean that Jesus is the “guarantor of a better covenant?” Koester explains,
- “People [in the ancient world] regularly agreed that life is better than death.¹⁰⁶⁰ Therefore, instead of identifying the line of Jewish priests with tradition, *Hebrews* associates them with *mortality*.”¹⁰⁶¹
- o. Here, the rich Christology of the book again emerges, in contrasting *the eternal high priesthood of Jesus*—with that of the Levitical high priests:
- **Heb. 7:22-23** “The former priests were many in number, because they were *prevented by death* from continuing in office; but he holds his priesthood permanently, *because He continues forever*.”
- p. Yet, as Koester explains,
- “Like Israel’s priests, *Jesus did die*, yet death did not terminate His priesthood, but rather inaugurated it. Jesus ‘*offered himself*’ through death,¹⁰⁶² yet death did not mean that He ceased to exist, for through His exaltation he continues forever.²⁴⁸
- q. Margaret Barker correctly situates the distinction between the priesthood of the Old Covenant—and that of the New Covenant in terms of *resurrection*:

¹⁰⁵⁶ *I Chron.* 21:28 “At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he made his sacrifices there.” Incidentally, it is on the same basis that Jesus explains David and his men “eating the bread of the Presence” in the Temple, i.e., on the basis on David’s share in the Melchizedekian priesthood. See: *Matt.* 12:1-8; *I Sam.* 21:1-6.

¹⁰⁵⁷ See: *Matt.* 1:2; 2:3; 2:6; *Luke* 3:30-33; *I Sam.* 17:12.

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Heb.* 7:20.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Koester: “A surety was often a relative or friend” (*Hebrews*, 363). See: *Sir* 29:14; Plutarch, *Alcibiades* 5.4.

¹⁰⁶⁰ See: *Deut.* 30:15; *Prov.* 14:27; *Jer.* 8:3.

¹⁰⁶¹ Koester, *Hebrews*, 371.

¹⁰⁶² See: *Heb.* 7:27.

²⁴⁸ There is also an implied contrast between the many priests of the Levitical order and the singular priesthood of Jesus. This is reinforced by the instances of *hoi men ... ho de* in 7:20–21, 23–24.

- “When Hebrews compared the two priesthoods—Melchizidek’s and Aarons—the *difference between them was the resurrection* ... [the author of *Hebrews*] explained that the sons of Aaron were priests *due to ‘descent’*, but Melchizidek was *a priest of ‘ascent.’* He ‘arises’—the word means ‘resurrection’ by the ‘power of an indestructible life.’¹⁰⁶³ The Aaronic priests die and have successors, but Melchizidek is a priest forever, because he is already resurrected.”¹⁰⁶⁴
- r. In articulating the key theological distinction between the eternal priesthood of Jesus and the former, mortal priesthood of Aaron, this extended discussion in *Hebrews* comes to something of a high point in the following:
- **Heb. 7:26-28** “For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, *holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens.* He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; He did this once for all when He offered up himself. Indeed, the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son *who has been made perfect forever.*”¹⁰⁶⁵
- s. In chapter 9, *Hebrews* builds upon this idea, of Christ as the high priest—and the sacrifice that is offered, and compares the “sacrifice” of Christ on the Cross to that of the high priests of the Old Covenant on the *Day of Atonement*:
- **Heb. 9:11-14** “But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect [tabernacle]¹⁰⁶⁶ (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) *He entered once for all into the [Sanctuary],* taking not the blood of goats and calves *but his own blood,* thus securing an *eternal redemption.* For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, *how much more shall the blood of Christ,* who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”
- t. It was the corruption of the priesthood, ultimately, that the author of *Hebrews* blames for the downfall of the temple—and the rise of the new temple in Jesus. Meanwhile, for now and forevermore, according to its author, “priesthood” has been taken up into the reality of the Risen Christ:

¹⁰⁶³ *Heb.* 7:16.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*, 112. See: *Heb.* 7:23-24.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Vanhoye: “What is really new in this whole paragraph is its *polemical tone.* The author is *no longer content* with peacefully setting forth his subject; *he launches an offensive.* From the first phase (7:11) *he attacks the Levitical priesthood.* He questions its values and hints at its suppression: ‘If a perfect consecration had truly been conferred by the Levitical priesthood ... what need would there still have been *to raise up a priesthood of another kind?*’” (*Old Testament Priests and the New Priest*, 163.)

¹⁰⁶⁶ “Some take the “tent” to be *Christ’s body* [gives examples] since God’s Word became ‘flesh’ and ‘tented’ in Jesus (*John* 1:14), whose body was a ‘*templé*’ (*John* 2:21). Some identify the tent with *Christ’s humanity* [gives examples]; *His resurrected body* (Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest*, 193–96), *His eucharistic body* ... or the church as his body” See: Koester, *Hebrews*, 409.

- **Barker:** “The Christian claim is unmistakable: *the corruption of the priesthood has brought the downfall of the temple, and Jesus was the new high priest.*”¹⁰⁶⁷
- u. The true sanctuary of Jesus, the eternal high priest, is at the right hand of the Father, where he continually “*lives to make intercession*”:¹⁰⁶⁸
- **Catechism:** “The lifting up of Jesus on the cross signifies and announces his lifting up by his Ascension into heaven, and indeed begins it. Jesus Christ, the one priest of the new and eternal Covenant, ‘*entered, not into a sanctuary made by human hands . . . but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.*’¹⁰⁶⁹ There Christ *permanently exercises his priesthood*, for he “*always lives to make intercession*” for “those who draw near to God through him.”¹⁰⁷⁰ As ‘*high priest of the good things to come*’ he is the center and the principal actor of the liturgy that honors the Father in heaven.”¹⁰⁷¹
- v. As such, Christ has accomplished what the Aaronic high priests *could not*—the inner sanctification on the believer, making them into a “dwelling place” for the Holy Spirit:
- **Heb. 10:11-14** “And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God, then to wait until his enemies should be made a stool for his feet. For by a single offering *He has perfected*¹⁰⁷² for all time those who are sanctified.”
- w. In light of this, the author of *Hebrews* admonishes his readers to “enter the sanctuary of God’s rest. In the following, note that phrases such as “*the confession of our hope*” [10:23] and “*meeting together*” [10:25] are liturgical language, rooted in the weekly Sunday worship ritual of the earliest Christians:¹⁰⁷³
- **Heb. 10:19-25** “Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which He opened for us through the [veil], that is, *through His flesh*, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast *the confession of our hope* without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good

¹⁰⁶⁷ Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*, 56.

¹⁰⁶⁸ See: *Heb.* 7:25.

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Heb.* 9:24.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *Heb.* 7:25.

¹⁰⁷¹ CCC #662. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 173. *Heb* 9:11; see: *Rev.* 4:6–11.

¹⁰⁷² Vanhoye remarks that previously, Christ was “made complete,” but now He “makes others complete” in relation to God (*Old Testament Priests and the New Priest*, 218).

¹⁰⁷³ “This practice of the Christian assembly dates from the beginnings of the apostolic age. The *Letter to the Hebrews* reminds the faithful “not to neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some, but to encourage one another.” CCC #2178. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 525.

works, *not neglecting to meet together*, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day [of Judgment] drawing near.”

x. Finally, the context of these liturgical and priestly admonitions are rooted in the Eucharistic sacrifice:

- **Catechism:** “The lifting up of Jesus on the cross signifies and announces his lifting up by his Ascension into heaven, and indeed begins it. Jesus Christ, *the one priest of the new and eternal Covenant*, ‘entered, not into a sanctuary made by human hands . . . but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.’¹⁰⁷⁴ There Christ *permanently* exercises his priesthood, for He ‘*always lives to make intercession*’ for ‘those who draw near to God through Him.’¹⁰⁷⁵ As ‘*high priest of the good things to come*’ He *is the center and the principal actor of the liturgy* that honors the Father in heaven.”¹⁰⁷⁶
- **Andre Feuillet,** “*Haec pontifex summus propiator ipse et propitiatorium, sacerdos et sacrificium, pro nobis oravit*”¹⁰⁷⁷

Having examined some key points of temple theology in the book of *Hebrews*, we now turn to our final book, *Revelation*.

III. THE BOOK OF REVELATION: THE HEAVENLY TEMPLE

1. WHAT KIND OF BOOK IS REVELATION?

- a. The first thing that needs to be said about the book of *Revelation*, is that in its beauty and complexity, it is comprised of multiple *literary genre*.¹⁰⁷⁸
- b. As is well-recognized,¹⁰⁷⁹ *Revelation* obviously contains “*apocalyptic*” genre—with highly symbolic imagery, all of which must be approached with great care.¹⁰⁸⁰

¹⁰⁷⁴ *Heb.* 9:24.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Heb.* 7:25.

¹⁰⁷⁶ CCC #662. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 173.

¹⁰⁷⁷ André Feuillet, *The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers* (New York: Doubleday, 1975), 245. Citing a text by the medieval Benedictine and biblical exegete, Rupert of Deutz (1075-1129), Translation: “the high priest who was himself the one making atonement as well as the expiatory offering, both priest and sacrifice, implored this for us.”

¹⁰⁷⁸ “Genre criticism is that aspect of comparative literature that attempts to understand a literary work in relation to other similar works ... A literary genre consists of a *group of texts that exhibit a coherent and recurring pattern of features constituted by the interrelated elements of form, content, and function*” in: David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, vol. 52A, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), lxxi.

¹⁰⁷⁹ For a beginning (yet provocative) primer on *Revelation*, see: Scott Hahn, *The Lamb's Supper: The Mass as Heaven on Earth* (New York: Doubleday, 1999). Hahn succeeds in replacing “frenetic” apocalyptic readings and other mis-interpretations of the book, and places *Revelation* on sound liturgical footing. Along similar lines, see: Michael Barber, *Coming Soon: Unlocking the Book of Revelation and Applying Its Lessons Today* (Steubenville: Emmaus Road, 2006). Barber works through the text, and intersperses insights from the canon of the Old and New Testaments, from a Catholic perspective. For more detailed / advanced study, see the following commentaries and monographs: David E. Aune, *Word Biblical Commentary, Revelation 1–5*, vol. 52a; *Revelation 6–16*, vol. 52b, *Revelation 17–22*, vol. 52c (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997); Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993); *The Theology of the Book*

- c. *Revelation* also contains *prophecy*,¹⁰⁸¹ which require a similar (yet distinct) treatment as Old Testament books such as *Daniel*, *Ezekiel* and *Isaiah*, each of which *Revelation* makes extensive reference to throughout its twenty-two chapters.
- d. Lastly, and above all, it must be remembered that *Revelation* must be approached for what it is—a circular letter to seven churches, offering words of comfort, hope and admonition in times of persecution and apostasy.¹⁰⁸² It is saturated with *liturgical imagery* and symbolism, and its context is as *proclamation* in the Eucharistic liturgies of the churches to which it is addressed.¹⁰⁸³
- **Catechism:** “It is in this *eternal liturgy* that the Spirit and the Church enable us to participate whenever we celebrate the mystery of salvation in the sacraments.”¹⁰⁸⁴
- e. Some examples of *Revelation’s* liturgical imagery: the Apostle’s vision begins “on the Lord’s day;”¹⁰⁸⁵ the book is filled with temple imagery: “altars;”¹⁰⁸⁶ “the golden lampstand”¹⁰⁸⁷ and “incense,”¹⁰⁸⁸ and priestly figures in white vestments.¹⁰⁸⁹ There is “[hidden] manna;”¹⁰⁹⁰ “wine”¹⁰⁹¹ and the “holy, holy, holy” of Isaiah’s temple vision.¹⁰⁹² There are numerous “doxologies of glory” throughout the book¹⁰⁹³—and it all culminates in the “wedding supper of the lamb.”¹⁰⁹⁴

of Revelation (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993); Oscar Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship*. Trans. A. S. Todd and J. B. Torrance (London: SCM, 1953); André Feuillet, *The Apocalypse* (New York: Alba House, 1965); Craig Koester, *Revelation and the End of All Things* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001); G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*. Rev. ed. NCB London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1978; David Chilton, *Days of Vengeance* (Tyler, TX: Dominion Press, 1987).

¹⁰⁸⁰ See: “Revelation as an Apocalypse” in: Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, lxxvii and following.

¹⁰⁸¹ See: “Revelation as a Prophetic Apocalypse” in Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, lxxxix and following.

¹⁰⁸² See: “Revelation as a Letter” in Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, lxxxix and following.

¹⁰⁸³ “It is well to keep in mind that Revelation was meant to be *heard*, to be listened to: ‘blessed they who hear’ (*Rev.* 1:3). It has a dramatic dimension. Heard in the setting of an early Eucharistic liturgy, the scenes would have unfolded with theatrical effect” in: Wilfrid J. Harrington, *Revelation*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, vol. 16, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008), 6.

¹⁰⁸⁴ CCC # 1139. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 295.

¹⁰⁸⁵ See: *Rev.* 1:10.

¹⁰⁸⁶ See: *Rev.* 6:9; 8:3, 5; 9:13; 11:1; 14:18; 16:7.

¹⁰⁸⁷ See: *Rev.* 2:5.

¹⁰⁸⁸ See: *Rev.* 5:8; 8:3, 4; 18:13.

¹⁰⁸⁹ See: *Rev.* 1:6; 5:10; 7:9, 13, 14; 20:6; 22:14.

¹⁰⁹⁰ See: *Rev.* 2:17.

¹⁰⁹¹ See: *Rev.* 6:6; 14:8, 10, 19, 20; 17:2 18:3, 13; 19:15.

¹⁰⁹² See: *Rev.* 4:8; see: *Isa.* 6:3.

¹⁰⁹³ See: *Rev.* 1:5-6; 4:9, 11; 5:12-14; 7:12; 11:13; 19:1.

¹⁰⁹⁴ See: *Rev.* 19:9. For more on the liturgical imagery in *Revelation*, see: “Revelation’s Mass Appeal: The Liturgy of Heaven” in Barber, *Coming Soon*, 23-32; also: Margaret Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ. Which*

2. **THEOLOGIA GLORIAE.** The entire book of *Revelation* is, in some sense, a *theologia gloriae* “a theology of glory,” inasmuch as the vision of Saint John is a vision of heavenly mysteries and heavenly liturgy:¹⁰⁹⁵
- Rev. 4:1 “After this I looked, and lo, in heaven an open door! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, ‘Come up hither, and I will show you what must take place after this.’”
 - a. Margaret Barker reminds us that *Revelation* is not in its essence a book about “when future calamities will threaten humanity,” but about early Christian worship:
 - “The earliest picture of Christian worship is found in the *Book of Revelation*, set in the temple. This is how the first Christians imagined their worship; they joined, as we do today, with the angels and archangels.”¹⁰⁹⁶
3. **AQUINAS AND THE FOUR STAGES OF SALVATION.**
- a. Even more help in approaching the mysteries in *Revelation* is found in the writings of the Angelic Doctor, Thomas Aquinas. In the *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas cites four stages in man’s *reditus* [Latin: “return”] to God:
 - i. The state *before the Mosaic Law*;
 - ii. The state *of the Old (Mosaic) Law*;
 - iii. The state *of the New Law (of Christ)*;
 - iv. The state *of heavenly Glory*.¹⁰⁹⁷
 - b. Biblically, we can re-state of Aquinas’ “stages” in *temple language* as follows:
 - i. *Stage 1* is the period from Mt. Eden to Mt. Sinai, that is, from Adam to Moses, just prior to the giving of the Law at Sinai;
 - ii. *Stage 2* corresponds to the time from the early tabernacle to the Temple of Herod, that is, from Moses’ receiving the Law at Sinai to the time of Christ;¹⁰⁹⁸

God Gave to Him to Show to Servants What Must Soon Take Place (Revelation 1.1) (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000); R. Bauckham, “The Worship of Jesus in Apocalyptic Christianity,” *New Testament Studies* 27 (1980-1981) 322-41; “The Role of the Spirit in the Apocalypse,” *Evangelical Quarterly Review* 52 (1980) 66-83; Craig Koester, “The Distant Triumph Song: Music and the Book of Revelation,” *Word and World* 12 (March 1992) 243-49; O. A. Piper, “The Apocalypse of John and the Liturgy of the Ancient Church [Rev 5],” *Church History* 20 (March 1951) 10-22; G. K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (New York and London: Lanham, 1984); E. Cothenet, “Earthly and Heavenly Liturgy According to the Book of Revelation,” Chapter, *Roles in the Liturgical Assembly* (author E. Cothenet, trans. M. J. O’Connell; New York: Pueblo, 1981) 115-35 ; Hahn, “From the Beginning: The Mass of the First Christians,” in :*The Lamb’s Supper*, 28-39.

¹⁰⁹⁵ This should not to be confused with the second-half of *John’s Gospel*, which is frequently described as the “Book of Glory.” See our earlier discussion of *John’s Gospel*.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Barker, *Temple Themes in Early Christian Worship*, 20.

¹⁰⁹⁷ See: Levering, *Temple and Torah*, 110.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Even so, Aquinas does not consider the time of the temple and Mosaic law as a time *before grace*. Rather, “he argues that in all times and places there are ‘two kinds of men,’ good and evil, and that in all places and times the good accept God’s call and the wicked reject it. Furthermore, [Aquinas] does not conceive of a time before Christ *that lacked grace*. On the contrary ... the New Law (which is the grace of the Holy Spirit) *infuses the period of the Old Law, even though grace does not belong to the Old Law per se*” (Levering, *Temple and Torah*, 23, emphases added). Aquinas: “*I answer that*, It was most fitting for the Law to be given at the time of

- iii. *Stage 3* is the age of the new temple, and the sacrifice of Christ¹⁰⁹⁹ in the New Covenant,¹¹⁰⁰ sealed at the Last Supper and consummated on the Cross of Christ. (As such, this stage continues until the Second Coming);¹¹⁰¹
 - iv. Thus, *Stage 4* is the future age of the heavenly temple, inaugurated with Christ's Second Coming—the Day of Judgment and the consummation of history, when God will be “all in all”.¹¹⁰²
- c. Levering explains,
- “The first three ‘states’ are ordered to the fourth and are therefore intended to prepared human beings for the perfect worship of God. The Temple and the community of Israel organized around the Temple prefigures such worship.”¹¹⁰³

Moses. The reason for this may be taken from two things in respect of which every law is imposed on two kinds of men. Because it is imposed on some men who are hard-hearted and proud, whom the law restrains and tames: and it is imposed on good men, who, through being instructed by the law, are helped to fulfil what they desire to do. Hence it was fitting that the Law should be given at such a time as would be appropriate for the overcoming of man's pride ... Wherefore, after those times, it was necessary for a written law to be given as a remedy for human ignorance: because *by the Law is the knowledge of sin* (Rom. 3:20).—But, after man had been instructed by the Law, his pride was convinced of his weakness, through his being unable to fulfil what he knew. Hence, as the Apostle concludes (Rom. 8:3, 4), *what the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sent* (Vulg.,—*sending*) *His own Son, ... that the justification of the Law might be fulfilled in us* ... With regard to good men, the Law was given to them as a help; which was most needed by the people, at the time when the natural law began to be obscured on account of the exuberance of sin: for it was fitting that this help should be bestowed on men in an orderly manner, so that they might be led from imperfection to perfection; wherefore it was becoming that the Old Law should be given between the law of nature and the law of grace” (in: *Summa Theologica*, I-II Q.98 a.6 *sed contra*).

¹⁰⁹⁹ Aquinas clarifies: “It would seem that the ceremonies of the Old Law did not cease at the coming of Christ. For it is written (*Baruch 4:1*): *This is the book of the commandments of God, and the law that is forever*. But the legal ceremonies were part of the Law. *Therefore the legal ceremonies were to last forever*” in: *Summa Theologica*, III, Q83, a1; see: *Rev.* 13:8

¹¹⁰⁰ Levering explains that “the ‘*state of the New Law*’ begins after the Incarnation, while the New Law itself, as the grace of the Holy Spirit, is found in all places and all times. Given this distinction, it follows that the ‘*state of the Old Law*’ does not preclude the New Law's already being active. The ‘sacraments’ of the Mosaic Law [circumcision, sacrifice, etc., while they do not *cause grace*, nonetheless belong to the movement whereby men and women under the state of the Old Law *participated in the New Law*. As Aquinas remarks, ‘The ancient Fathers, *by observing the sacraments of the law*, were brought towards Christ through the same faith and love by which we are still brought to Him.’ The Mosaic Law and the New Law are thus *intrinsically linked*” (in *Christ's Fulfillment of Temple and Torah*, 23). Levering's quotation of Aquinas is from: *Summa Theologica*, 33, Q8, a.3, ad.3, using the translation of Colman O'Neill found in “St. Thomas on the Membership of the Church,” in *Thomist*, 49 (1985):88-442 (here, 94).

¹¹⁰¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, Q103, a3. Levering: “Aquinas holds that the ceremonial precepts are indeed observed forever, but only in their *fulfilled* reality, the end that God had in the beginning.” Moreover, “Jewish Christians, sharing in Christ's fulfillment of the Mosaic Law, do not lose their identity. Rather, they enter into the (supernatural) fullness of their identity” (*Temple and Torah*, 28, emphases added). On this last point, see: *Summa Theologica*, III, Q40, a4.

¹¹⁰² See: *I Cor.* 15:28. An important clarification: *Stage 4* is *eternal* and *timeless* ... it is in no way bound by time and / or space, as it pertains to God himself. As such, it is *only* from a human perspective of salvation history that it “begins” with Christ's Second Coming.

¹¹⁰³ Levering, *Temple and Torah*, 111.

4. REVELATION: 'THE APOCALYPTIC EXODUS.'

- a. How does all of this help us approach the book of *Revelation*—especially as it relates to our topic of temple theology?
- b. The book of *Revelation* shows us “Stage 4” as revealed by God to St. John, when He “made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.”¹¹⁰⁴
- c. This means that *Revelation* causes us to reflect back through the earlier stages of salvation history, contemplating how the various manifestations of the temple prepared us for the coming of Christ—and ultimately, for the “supper of the Lamb” which is yet to come.
- d. Putting this another way: As we encounter the various periods of salvation history, the stages before the Incarnation of Christ reveal, in various “shadowy” ways, the glory of the risen Christ.
- e. *This is what the tabernacle and Jerusalem Temple were in their purest form—a shadow of the reality of glory that was to come:*
 - **Daniélou:** “The Johannine Gospel appears as a kind of Paschal catechetical instruction, to show those baptized on the night of Holy Saturday that the Sacraments they then received were *divine interventions* which continued the *magnolia* [Latin: “great things”] of Yahweh at the time of the Exodus and also at the time of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. *From the beginning of the Prologue, the Word appears as the Shekinah, the abode of Yahweh’s glory, which dwelt in the midst of the people in the desert.*”¹¹⁰⁵
- f. In the same way as his Gospel, in *Revelation*, Saint John draws back to the time of the Exodus,¹¹⁰⁶ to present a kind of “apocalyptic version of the Exodus.”¹¹⁰⁷ Here, it is worth quoting Daniélou again at some length:
 - “The *Apocalypse* describes the history of the Christian people in terms borrowed from that of the Chosen Race [Israel]. The whole story [of *Revelation*] is dominated by the sacrifice of the lamb.¹¹⁰⁸ The *twelve tribes*

¹¹⁰⁴ *Rev.* 1:1-2.

¹¹⁰⁵ Daniélou, *From Shadow to Reality*, 161.

¹¹⁰⁶ John’s vision of God is rooted in the Old Testament. For example, God’s glory is depicted with vivid imagery of precious gems (jasper, carnelian) and a rainbow of color is lifted right out of *Ezekiel* (*Ezek.* 1: 26-28); The rainbow is reminiscent of the covenant with Noah in *Genesis* (*Gen.* 9:12-17); the gems of the heavenly Jerusalem are closely connected with the garden of Eden (*Gen* 2). John’s imagery ‘*flashes of lightning, and voices and peals of thunder*’ in his inaugural vision (*Rev.*4:5-6) is lifted from *Exod.* 19:5-6: “On the morning of the third day there were *thunder and lightning*, and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.” Along with this imagery in *Exod.* 19, note the ‘cloud of glory’ and the ‘very loud trumpet blast’ which also occupy the book of *Revelation*. The ‘sea of glass’ (*Rev.*4:6) may recall the firmament of *Gen* 1:7, but more likely is the *pavement of sapphire stone* – which Moses and the 70 elders “saw” in their vision of God in heaven. Finally, staying with stay with the Exodus motif, its well-worth noting that the Mosaic covenant is sealed with a meal: ‘*They beheld and ate and drank*’ (*Exod.* 24:11). Likewise, the book of *Revelation* culminates with the supper of the Lamb: “And the angel said to me, ‘Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb’” (*Rev.* 19:9).

¹¹⁰⁷ Daniélou, *From Shadow to Reality*, 164-65.

¹¹⁰⁸ *Rev.*5:12.

represent the whole Church,¹¹⁰⁹ while there deliverance is explicitly compared to *the crossing of the Red Sea*¹¹¹⁰ ... The Revelation of God is heralded by the signs of Sinai: the noise of *trumpets*¹¹¹¹ and *thunder and lightning*.¹¹¹² [Moreover] the punishments which are meted out to the enemies of God are repetitions of the plagues of Egypt: hail,¹¹¹³ the changing of the sea into blood,¹¹¹⁴ darkness,¹¹¹⁵ locusts.¹¹¹⁶ This is an *Apocalyptic version of the Exodus* ... It is John who affirms that *this Apocalyptic Exodus is fulfilled in Jesus Christ*.¹¹¹⁷

- g. It should be quite clear by this point in our reflection on *Revelation* as an “apocalypticizing” of the Exodus story. Let us conclude this section by looking at one such text from near the very end of the Apocalypse:
- **Rev. 22:3-4** “There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; *they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads.*”
- h. In terms of v. 3, we have already said much about the “renewal” of the whole creation, and so we will move to v. 4. Here, two things should strike us.
- i. First, in this age of the eschatological temple, God’s faith will finally see Him “face to face.” Recall in our study of *John’s Gospel* that this notion of “seeing God” was of great importance to understanding the Evangelist’s larger Christological portrayal of the Logos / Jesus. In short, only Jesus, God’s only-begotten Son, had the eternal joy and experience of “gazing” at the Father, “face to face.”
- j. This was a decisive move for John, for he was not-so-quietly underscoring that none of Israel’s heroes—not Jacob, not Abraham, not even Moses—had actually “see” God face to face: “*No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.*”¹¹¹⁸ John’s urgent message for the readers of the Gospel: only Jesus has “seen God,” and in His mercy, this same Jesus as “revealed” Himself to us, so that you too may “believe.”¹¹¹⁹
- k. But now—in the age of the eschatological Temple, the believer *will see God*—just as He is, ‘face to face.’
- l. Regarding v. 4, it seems clear that John’s theology in *Revelation* is in dialogue with the Prologue of his Gospel, a step beyond it we can say, as Jesus’ disciples

¹¹⁰⁹ *Rev.* 7:4–8.

¹¹¹⁰ *Rev.* 15:2 “And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.”

¹¹¹¹ See: *Rev.* 8:7.

¹¹¹² See: *Rev.* 8:5.

¹¹¹³ See: *Rev.* 8:7.

¹¹¹⁴ See: *Rev.* 8:8; 16:3.

¹¹¹⁵ See: *Rev.* 8:12; 16:10.

¹¹¹⁶ See: *Rev.* 9:3.

¹¹¹⁷ Daniélou, *From Shadow to Reality*, 164–65, emphases added.

¹¹¹⁸ *John* 1:18.

¹¹¹⁹ See: *John* 1:14b.

would finally have the experience he desired they would share with he and the other Apostles: “*that ... which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon ... and was made manifest to us ... we proclaim also to you ... that (y)our joy may be complete.*”¹¹²⁰

- m. This is a fascinating dimension of *Revelation’s* theology. Yet we are now in a position to go even further.
- n. Recall that in the cultic life of the Jerusalem Temple, the high priest went into the *Holy of Holies* but once a year—on the Day of Atonement. And what of him—did he see God? Naturally, the answer is a resounding “no!” In fact, he would shield his eyes, like the seraphim of *Isaiah* 6. In a “cloud” of thick incense, swung all around, the high priest was, much like Moses before him, “protected” from accidentally catching a glimpse of the glory of God on His throne.
- o. Now we are in a position to complete our examination of *Rev. 22:3-4*. After declaring that God’s saints will indeed “see his face,” he ends with the mysterious expression, “*and his name shall be on their foreheads.*”
- p. What could this possibly mean? There are many ciphers and unresolved riddles in *Revelation*—is this another example?
- q. No. In fact, when examined in light of Exodus, we will see that it fits perfectly with what has just been discussed above.
- r. In the book of *Exodus*, in the context of Yahweh’s giving Moses the commands for constructing the Tabernacle, according to the “heavenly pattern”¹¹²¹ shown to him, Moses is told to prepare a turban for the high priest, bearing the expression “HOLY TO THE LORD” upon it:
 - **Exod. 28:36-38** “And you shall make a plate of pure gold, and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, ‘Holy to the LORD.’ And you shall fasten it on the turban by a lace of blue; it shall be on the front of the turban. *It shall be upon Aaron’s forehead*, and Aaron shall take upon himself any guilt incurred in the holy offering which the people of Israel hallow as their holy gifts; it shall always be upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.”
- s. *This is a profound image!* With this engraving of gold, the high priest bears, as it were, the very “name” of God upon his own head. *Holy to the Lord!* He was for the people, as we have said all along, the “image” of God for the people. (The Name reminded him too, that it was not His power, but God’s, that forgave Israel’s iniquities.
- t. Just as Adam was called to “image” God as the priest of the cosmic temple, “filling the earth” with the glorious presence of God, so too was Israel’s high priest to “image” God, and in “atoning” for the guilt of Israel, they would be cleansed, forgiven, and restored in their own likeness to God. As the high priest returned to the people of the temple, having completed the liturgy of atonement, Israel would “see” God, inasmuch as their high priest bore his name, as well as his glory in his person. They were now free—forgiven and free to extend God’s glory further and further into the world.

¹¹²⁰ *I John* 1:1-4.

¹¹²¹ See: *Exod.* 25:9; 40; *Num.* 8:4; see: *Acts* 7:44.

- u. Returning to *Revelation 22*—we can see now that John has once again *apocalypticized* Exodus, and *apocalypticized* its high priest. Here is the point—by the death and Resurrection of Jesus, *the veil has been brought down, and every believer is before God a high priest, who bears His name and His image.*
- v. Indeed—they shall all see His face, and His name shall be on all of their foreheads—forevermore.
- w. Daniélou summarizes:
 - “A deep impression forms itself in our mind after reading these many texts. It was the clear intention of the New Testament writers to show the mystery of Christ as at once continuing and surpassing the outstanding events in the story of Israel at the time of Moses. We are thus led to see in history *the fulfillment of the divine plan*, baffling from our human point of view, yet offering a coherence and inner harmony which allows man’s faith to rest therein as upon an immovable rock.”¹¹²²

5. THE LAMB STANDING AS THOUGH SLAIN.

- a. Through the book of *Revelation*, amidst all of the liturgical imagery, reminiscent of the Jerusalem Temple, no image is more pervasive than the Lamb.¹¹²³ The first and most important of its many occurrences in *Revelation 5*:
 - **Rev. 5:6** “And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth ...”¹¹²⁴
- b. At least three points need to be made, as it relates to temple theology:
 1. *The meaning of ‘standing as though slain.’* The lamb “standing as though slain” is strange, yet it points to something beyond the lamb of the temple. This phraseology “does not mean that the Lamb only *appeared* to have been slaughtered but rather that the Lamb had been slaughtered and was now alive, thus combining the two theological motifs of death and resurrection.”¹¹²⁵
 2. *A Key Image of Temple Sacrifice—Recapitulated.* Saint John’s imagery is *temple imagery*—behold the Lamb of God:¹¹²⁶ “Christ crucified and risen, the one high priest of the true sanctuary, the same one “who offers and is offered, who gives and is given.”¹¹²⁷

¹¹²² Daniélou, *From Shadow to Reality*, 165, emphases added. Aquinas: “It is true to say that Christ was sacrificed, even in the figures of the Old Testament: hence it is stated in the Apocalypse, ‘Whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb, which was slain from the beginning of the world’ in: *Summa Theologica*, III, Q83, a1; see: *Rev.* 13:8.

¹¹²³ The term “lamb” (Greek: *arnion*) occurs twenty-nine times in *Revelation*: 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 8:1; 12:11; 13:8, 11, ; 14:1, 4, 10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7, 9; 21:9, 14, 22, 23; 22:1, 3.

¹¹²⁴ Although it cannot be pursued further, note that the Holy Spirit is depicted in a *seven-fold* manner, recalling our earlier discussion of the number “seven” as the number of the Sabbath, of the perfection, and of God’s covenant with His people.

¹¹²⁵ David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, vol. 52A, 353.

¹¹²⁶ See: *John* 1:29, 35.

¹¹²⁷ CCC #1137. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 294.

- Ratzinger adds: “It is remarkable how important a part is played in the Bible by the image of the lamb. We come across it in the very first pages, in the account of the sacrifice of Abel, the shepherd; and in the last book of Holy Scripture the Lamb is at the very center of heaven and earth. According to the book of *Revelation*, the Lamb alone can open the seals of history. *It is the Lamb, who appears as slain and yet lives, who receives the homage of all creatures in heaven and earth.*”¹¹²⁸
3. *The Crucified Lamb Gives Eternal Life.* At the end of the book of *Revelation*, the Apostle adds:
- **Rev. 22:1-2** “Then he showed me the river of *the water of life*, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, *the tree of life* with its *twelve kinds of fruit*, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”
 - **Ratzinger:** “There it is stated that in the early church there were two trees, just as there had been in Paradise; the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree of life is Christ Himself. *This tree becomes accessible in the spiritual understanding of Scripture.*”¹¹²⁹
6. **‘THE SONG OF THE LAMB.’**
- a. In the above passage from *Revelation*, we find ourselves in the culminating chapter of the book.
 - b. And here, it is as if *all* the temple theology—from *Genesis* onward is flashed before our eyes one last time, to drive home the point that it has all been leading to this vision—a recapitulation of God’s cosmic temple at Eden.
 - c. Here is the “river,” reminiscent of the rivers of *Genesis 2*—the *Pishon*, the *Gihon*, the *Tigris* and the *Euphrates*, flowing down and out from the mountain of God, Mt. Eden.¹¹³⁰ They fructify the garden of the Man and Woman, and give life to the whole earth. In *Revelation*, they pour forth the “water of life,” recalling the Spirit moving over the “waters of creation,”¹¹³¹ the water God provided in the wilderness,¹¹³² the water poured over the altar of the Temple at Tabernacles, which Christ drew upon in His temple saying.¹¹³³
 - d. Above all, it recalls the “blood and water,” flowing from the side of the crucified Christ, the new temple, as it did in the old Temple, when the lambs

¹¹²⁸ Joseph Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One: An Approach to a Spiritual Christology*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 114.

¹¹²⁹ Joseph Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*, trans. Zachary Hayes (Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989), 152.

¹¹³⁰ See: *Gen.* 2:11, 13, 14.

¹¹³¹ See: *Gen.* 1:2.

¹¹³² See: *Num.* 19:11.

¹¹³³ *John* 7:38 “He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” See: *Zech.* 14:8.

were sacrificed Passover after Passover.¹¹³⁴ Now, it reflects the waters of baptism, which plunge the Christian down into the depths of death with Christ,” rising to new life, Resurrection life in the Risen Christ.¹¹³⁵

- e. Finally, here is the Lamb himself—not slain, but Risen, triumphant, standing next to the “tree of life,” the *Holy of Holies* of *Genesis*. Upon the Tree are ‘*twelve kinds of fruit*’—a recapitulation of the true Israel, now living in faith, nourished by the Lamb Himself, just as Adam “ate” from the Tree provided by God for his sustenance. Now, the Church is illuminated by the Lamb itself: “And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, *for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.*”¹¹³⁶
- f. Reflecting on the lamb in *Revelation*, Ratzinger adds:
 - **Ratzinger:** “The *Apocalypse* of St. John draws the bow back even farther. The final enemies of the People of God have stepped onto the stage of history: the satanic trinity, consisting of the beast, its image, and the number of its name. *Everything* seems lost for the holy Israel of God in the face of such overwhelming odds. But then the Seer is given the vision of the conquerors, ‘standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb’ (*Rev.* 15:3). The paradox now becomes even more powerful. It is not the gigantic beasts of prey, with their power over the media and their technical strength, who win the victory. *No, it is the sacrificed Lamb that conquers.* And so once again, definitively, there resounds the song of God’s servant Moses, *which has now become the song of the Lamb.*”¹¹³⁷

IV. THE WORLD-FILLING TEMPLE OF THE LAMB

1. When our study first began, we examined the “temple of Eden,” as depicted in the opening chapters of *Genesis*. There, we encountered Adam—not just the “first formed father of the earth,”¹¹³⁸ but *a gloriously robed priest, the high priest of Mt. Eden.*
2. He, along with Eve, was called to “be fruitful and multiply,”¹¹³⁹ a command oft repeated throughout the story of Scripture, from *Genesis* onward.¹¹⁴⁰ Whereas

¹¹³⁴ See: *John* 19:34.

¹¹³⁵ See especially *Rom.* 6:1-11; also *I Pet.* 3:21.

¹¹³⁶ *Rev.* 22:5.

¹¹³⁷ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 137 (emphasis added).

¹¹³⁸ *Wisd.* 10:1.

¹¹³⁹ *Gen.* 1:28.

¹¹⁴⁰ Most literally, this command to “be fruitful and multiply” is evident in texts like *Gen.* 8:17; 9:1, 7; 26:22; 35:11; *Jer.* 23:3; *Ezek.* 36:11. Implicitly, it is evident in God’s call for Abraham to “go” (*Gen.* 12:1) so that he by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves” (*Gen.* 12:3). From this foundation, every stage of the covenantal story is seen as an “echo” of Adam’s failed call—and Abraham as the “new Adam” figure, through whom, God’s temple presence will reach the ends of the earth. As we saw, there are numerous New Testament parallels to this “filling” motif: the spread of the Kingdom of God: “Go therefore and make

- Adam's disobedience caused him to fail in his vocation to "fill the earth" with the presence of God, Abraham and Israel succeeded—but *partially, always partially*.
3. The story of the Gospels is that Jesus is the New Adam, the true and definitive Adam, who through His crucifixion and Resurrection, now in His ascended glory at the right hand of the Father, *is filling the earth God's temple presence*, through the Church.
 - **Catechism:** "For man, this consummation will be the final realization of the unity of the human race, which God willed from creation and of which the pilgrim Church has been 'in the nature of sacrament.'"¹¹⁴¹
 4. The glorious presence of God is "tabernacling" throughout the earth, in the Word of God, and in *the sacramental power of Christ alive in the Church*—especially the Eucharist. All of this "temple building" is not the work of the Church alone. That would only be part of the story. The ongoing "filling of the earth" is ultimately powered along, driven by the divine Spirit of God, and not by the might or creativity of the human spirit alone.
 5. Next, we turn to chapter 21, and its vision of the new Jerusalem:
 - **Rev. 21:1-2** "Then I saw *a new heaven and a new earth*; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw *the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God*, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband ..."
 6. Here is another example of the "culminating vision" which we discussed above. Yet, there appears to be a riddle in this particular text: *why is it that here, John sees a new heaven and a new earth—yet later in the same chapter, there is no such description of this new heaven and new earth?*
 - To put a fine point in it, why does John not provide details of "*the many forests, mountains, streams, valleys, and the many other features of a fertile worldwide new creation?*"¹¹⁴²
 7. Clearly, such descriptions are absent from this otherwise very vivid book. John sees a "gardenlike" temple, but not a "full panorama" of the new heavens and new earth.¹¹⁴³ *Why?*
 8. Beale's answer is very sound: "the new creation and Jerusalem *are none other than God's tabernacle*. This tabernacle is the true temple of God's special presence portrayed throughout [*Rev.*] chapter 21."¹¹⁴⁴ As the Catechism puts it, "*In this new universe, the heavenly Jerusalem, God will have his dwelling among men.*"¹¹⁴⁵
 9. We can add to our discussion an earlier text from *Revelation*:
 - **Rev. 3:20** "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; *if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*"

disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ..."(Matt. 28:19).

¹¹⁴¹ CCC #1045. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 273. See: *Lumen Gentium*, 1.

¹¹⁴² Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 23, emphasis added.

¹¹⁴³ See: Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 23, emphasis added.

¹¹⁴⁴ See: Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 23, emphasis added.

¹¹⁴⁵ CCC# 1044. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 272.

10. This ought to remind us of our temple theology of *Genesis*, and the concept of “temple gatekeepers.” Whereas the first Adam failed to keep out the “unrighteous” (i.e. wicked serpent) thereby “guarding” God’s holy temple, the Last Adam recapitulates this failure in his *inviting in all the righteous into the glorious presence of God*.
11. Moreover, as the true “Door,”¹¹⁴⁶ has the “*keys of David*,” and
 - **Rev. 3:7** “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The words of the holy one, *the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one opens.*’”¹¹⁴⁷
12. Our argument finds further support from another text in *Revelation 21*:
 - **Rev. 21:8** “But as for *the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars*, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death ...”
13. The Lamb, the “True One,” who has the “keys of David” lets in the righteous but keep out (“cuts off”) the unrighteous from entry into God’s holy temple.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS.

1. In the book of *Revelation*, the mystery of the temple has come to its destination: the wedding supper of the Lamb, in the heavenly Jerusalem.
2. The entire creation has been made radiant by the presence Christ: the eternal high priest, the New Adam, the New Moses and New Aaron—who fills the *new heavens and new earth* with the glory of God.
3. This is the “the definitive realization of God’s plan to bring under a single head “all things in [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth.”¹¹⁴⁸

This brings our reflection on temple theology in Scripture to a conclusion. In the Epilogue, we will offer a few reflections on some of its implications in the early Church.

¹¹⁴⁶ See: *John* 10:1, 2, 7, 9.

¹¹⁴⁷ Catholic Biblical Association (Great Britain), *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition* (New York: National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, 1994), Re 3:7.

¹¹⁴⁸ CCC #1043. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 272. See: *Eph.* 1:10.

EPILOGUE

HEIRS OF THE TEMPLE: ARCHITECTURE & WORSHIP IN THE EARLY CHURCH

“But the Father having proved Him now as well as then, has established Him as the head of the corner of this our common church. This, therefore, *the living temple of the living God*, formed of yourselves, I say, is *the greatest and the truly divine sanctuary*, whose inmost shrines, though invisible to the multitude, are really holy, a *Holy of Holies*.¹¹⁴⁹

EUSEBIUS, BISHOP OF CAESAREA
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

I. SPOTLIGHT: THE SYNAGOGUE OR THE TEMPLE?

1. JEWISH COROLLARIES TO THE FIRST CHRISTIAN SANCTUARIES .

- a. We have covered a lot of ground in this study. In keeping with our purpose, we have stayed closely to the contours of Scripture and biblical theology.
- b. Before bringing our entire discussion to a close, we wish to leave the reader with one final impression, namely: *the impact of temple theology in the early Church*.
- c. We would do well to be careful not to indiscriminately arrive at hasty conclusions by overlaying the early Christian cathedrals with the blueprint of the earlier Temple.
- d. Clearly, the earliest Christians saw their worship of the crucified and Resurrected Christ as *decisively new*, and not a continuation of Judaism with its Torah and Temple: “Behold, I make all things new.”¹¹⁵⁰
- e. Yet, if the roots of Christian theology plunge deep into the soil of the Old Testament, as they surely do, then the question may be asked, *which ‘sacred space’ from ancient Judaism was closest to the form and function of Christian sanctuaries—the temple or the synagogue?*

2. THE SYNAGOGUE IN ANCIENT JUDAISM.

- a. We have said little of the Jewish synagogue, and here is not the place to engage the topic extensively.
- b. Suffice it to say that the synagogue movement began in earnest after the Babylonian exile, in the 500’s B.C. As a matter of necessity, Jews living in the “Diaspora” needed places for prayer, fellowship and community.
- c. In their most basic sense, this was the function of the ancient synagogue.¹¹⁵¹ It should be made very clear that the synagogue was *not* a replacement for the Temple in Jerusalem.¹¹⁵²

¹¹⁴⁹ Eusebius, *An Ecclesiastical History* 10:4. Ed. by Parker S.E. (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1847), 416.

¹¹⁵⁰ *Rev.* 21:5.

¹¹⁵¹ For more on Jewish synagogues, see: Dan Urman and Paul V. M. Flesher, eds., *Ancient Synagogues: Historical Analysis and Archeological Discovery*. Vol. 1, *Studia Post-Biblica* 47, 1 (Leiden/New York/Cologne”

- d. It was in the Temple—and *only* in the Temple—that sacrifices were offered. It was only in the Temple that the high priest and those men in his service—priests and Levites—offered slain animals to God. It was in only in the Temple—and not in the many smaller synagogues that dotted the landscape, that the presence of God, the glory of God, dwelt in the *Holy of Holies*.
- e. And so, the synagogue must be seen as a kind of “extension” of the Temple—but only inasmuch as those non-sacrificial dimensions of the temple were concerned: prayer, reading of Torah, Sabbath services, community fellowship.
3. **A CATHOLIC ANALOGY: THE ‘SANCTUARY’ VS. THE ‘PARISH CENTER.’**
- a. As imperfect as most analogies are, here is an imperfect (yet hopefully useful) one: consider the difference between the *temple* and the *synagogue* as the difference between the sanctuary of the local Catholic parish—and its parish hall / center.
- b. Today, many Catholic parishes have some sort of “parish hall,” for adult faith formation, as well as for council meetings, receptions, and other “all-purpose” functions.
- c. In many instances, as in the case of my own town’s local parish, the “parish center” is even a separate building from the church proper, with its sanctuary as the center of the “campus.” In other cases, the parish center may be in a basement or another separate space, apart from the sanctuary.
- d. Both sanctuary and hall play important roles in the life of the parish—but *one is not the other*. Many Catholics disdain when the Mass is celebrated in the parish hall, for example, as an “overflow” room at a Christmas or Easter liturgy.
- e. Conversely, no one in their right mind could imagine a children’s birthday party, with magician and all, playing out in front of the tabernacle in the sanctuary.
- f. The above is meant to illustrate, however imperfectly, the distinctions we wish to make between the Jewish temple versus the synagogue. By way of analogy, one may *in some sense* liken the Catholic sanctuary to the Temple, with the Catholic altar and tabernacle echoing the altar of the Temple’s *Holy Place* and the tabernacle for the Blessed Sacrament echoing the presence of God Himself in the Temple’s *Holy of Holies*.
- g. Along similar lines, one may *in some sense* liken the Catholic “parish hall / center” to the Jewish synagogue. Both are places of religious life—and yet are better characterized by things like *prayer, discussion, fellowship, even laughter and refreshment*.
4. **FROM ANALOGY TO REALITY.**
- The reason the above analogy is important is that going into the rest of this chapter, one must have in mind a *clear distinction* between temple and synagogue,

E. J. Brill, 1995); Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2000); Sharsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 68-85.

¹¹⁵² “Only a small fraction of the total Jewish population lived so near the [Jerusalem] Temple that they could visit it and take part in the Temple [liturgy] on a regular basis ... [for many, it was] something that required a week or two, and was ... something one did only once or twice a year, or less. For distant Diaspora Jews, pilgrimage to the Temple may have been a once-in-a-lifetime experience.” Sharsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 83.

- so that a sensible discussion can be undertaken as to the extent to which *temple theology* (not ‘synagogue theology’) may have influenced early Christian worship.
- a. In fairness, there is a legitimate and necessary purpose of the synagogue (both ancient and modern) and the parish hall / center. But make no mistake, it is the *temple*—and not the synagogue that concerns us in what follows.
 - b. Here, Ratzinger offers a very insightful reflection on the distinctions between temple and synagogue as they concern us here.

- **Ratzinger:** “Christian worship, or rather the liturgy of the Christian faith, *cannot be viewed simply as a Christianized form of the synagogue service*, however much its actual development owes to the synagogue service. *The synagogue was always ordered toward the Temple and remained so, even after the Temple’s destruction.* The synagogue’s liturgy of the Word, which is celebrated with magnificent profundity, regards itself as incomplete, and for that reason it is very different from the liturgy of the Word in Islam, which, together with pilgrimage and fasting, constitutes the whole of divine worship as decreed by the Koran. By contrast, the synagogue ... service is the divine worship that takes place *in the absence of the Temple and in expectation of its restoration.* Christian worship, for its part, regards the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem as final and as theologically necessary. Its place has been taken by the universal Temple of the risen Christ, whose outstretched arms on the Cross span the world, in order to draw all men into the embrace of eternal love. The new Temple already exists, and so too does the new, the definitive sacrifice: the humanity of Christ opened up in his Cross and Resurrection. *The prayer of the man Jesus is now united with the dialogue of eternal love within the Trinity. Jesus draws men into this prayer through the Eucharist, which is thus the ever-open door of adoration and the true Sacrifice, the Sacrifice of the New Covenant.*”¹¹⁵³

II. AFTERSHOCKS: THE IMPACT OF TEMPLE THEOLOGY IN THE EARLY CHURCH.

1. To be clear—there are many various implications of ‘temple theology’ in the age of the early Church, most of which cannot be treated here.
2. What we wish to do in this final chapter is somewhat modest—to simply show a few elements of Christian liturgy and worship practices which may be traced back, in some way, to temple theology as we have been discussing all along.
3. Before going further, we should make an important clarification: by the beginnings of the patristic era, there is both a “*continuity*” and a “*discontinuity*” between ancient Judaism and its “offspring,” Christianity.
 - On the one hand, we have seen many examples already of the ways that Christianity drew upon the “story” and “sacraments” of the Old Covenant.
 - This can be seen in Jesus’ transforming the Feast of Tabernacles with His Temple saying, “*I am the light of the world*”).¹¹⁵⁴
 - Another example is St. Melito’s hymn on the Eucharist as the “new Passover,”¹¹⁵⁵ which we examined earlier.

¹¹⁵³ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 49.

¹¹⁵⁴ *John* 8:12.

¹¹⁵⁵ St. Melito of Sardis (early 2nd century), *Peri Tou Pascha* [“Concerning the Passover”] (above).

- In such examples as these, and in numerous patristic writings, early Christianity reflected a decided *continuity* with the Old Testament. It became the “playbook” for early apologists like St. Justin Martyr and St. Irenaeus of Lyons.¹¹⁵⁶ They proclaimed Christ as the Jewish messiah, and as the fulfillment of Israel’s Torah and Temple.
- On the other hand, it needs to be quickly added that even before the end of the first century, there was serious hostilities between Jews and Christians—hostilities which would persist long into the patristic era.
 - Without question, *John’s Gospel* contains a decided polemic against the Jewish authorities, those that bore much responsibility for His death.¹¹⁵⁷
 - Within the truth of the Gospel, the Temple authorities indeed had Christ crucified (by the Romans). This is found the Evangelist’s phrase, “*the Jews*,” which clearly cannot be directed at all Jewish people of the time (much less thereafter).
 - Nevertheless, it is indicative of the tensions between Jews and Christians in the era of the early Church. Likewise, the wicked and hypocritical depiction of the Pharisees in the Synoptic Gospels surely is not the whole picture of this popular Jewish group. Still, none of the Evangelists should in any way be faulted for their portrayal of the dramatic encounters between Christ and the Pharisees.¹¹⁵⁸
 - Our final example may be the clearest one of all. Recall our earlier discussion of the “*eight day of creation*.” On one hand, this expression is undeniably dependent upon the Jewish Sabbath (the *seventh* day), if it is to be sensible at all. And yet, the very image of the *eighth day*—and not the *seventh*, as the day of Christian worship—represents a kind of “over and against” move, a surpassing of the one by the other. The Lord’s Day is *the new Sabbath*, yet it is *more than the Sabbath* of the Old Covenant.
- 4. In sum, there was in the early Church a *continuity* with Judaism, and at the same time, a “*parting of the ways*” with it as well.¹¹⁵⁹ Given these realities, any discussion of Jewish Christianity, or of the influences of ‘temple theology’ upon early Christianity must be approached with sensitivity and in light of this “both / and” situation.

¹¹⁵⁶ In fairness, both of these figures were highly proficient in Hellenistic philosophy, and in no way should one construe their “defense” of Christ as simply a “proof texting” from the Hebrew Scriptures. Even when their arguments run along primarily Scriptural lines, with various “proofs” from the prophets, etc., it is accomplished on an impressive rhetorical footing.

¹¹⁵⁷ See: *John* 7:1—also 1:19; 2:13, 18, 20; 3:1; 5:15, etc. See the *Catechism’s* important and helpful discussion here: “The personal sin of the participants (Judas, the Sanhedrin, Pilate) is known to God alone. Hence we cannot lay responsibility for the trial on the Jews in Jerusalem as a whole, despite the outcry of a manipulated crowd and the global reproaches contained in the apostles’ calls to conversion after Pentecost” (CCC # 597; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 153).

¹¹⁵⁸ “To be sure, Christ’s relations with the Pharisees were not exclusively polemical. Some Pharisees warned him of the danger he was courting; Jesus praises some of them, like the scribe of *Mark* 12:34, and dines several times at their homes. Jesus endorses some of the teachings imparted by this religious elite of God’s people: the resurrection of the dead, certain forms of piety (almsgiving, fasting, and prayer), the custom of addressing God as Father, and the centrality of the commandment to love God and neighbor.” (CCC# 575; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 153.)

¹¹⁵⁹ See: James D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity*. London: SCM and Philadelphia: Trinity, 1991.

5. Moreover, it must be remembered that any “importing” of temple theology by the early Church—be it in the life of the sacraments, or the architecture of its churches—would never simply “pass over” the thought of the New Testament.
6. The early Church would be interested in *both*—and would likely begin with the mysteries of Christ in the New Testament, before “mining” the Old Testament for its important contributions. Thus, we will consider the influence of temple theology of *both Testaments as a canonical unity*.
7. The remainder of this chapter offers one larger idea that we wish to impart to the reader—that the “aftershock” of centuries of *biblical temple theology* were indeed felt in the early centuries of Christianity.
8. The nearer one is to the epicenter of a great earthquake, the most powerful waves continue to be felt, and shake the earth. The same phenomena is true with regard to the temple theology of Scripture: *it continued to “radiate” throughout the Church in a number of important ways for some time to come*—and it may well be added, its tremors are still being felt.

III. NEAREST THE EPICENTER: THE CHURCHES OF THE HOLY LAND.

1. INTRODUCTION.

- a. In keeping with our above metaphor, we will make a few remarks on the churches of the Holy Land, as they were indeed “*nearest the epicenter*” of the Jerusalem Temple—and temple theology.
- b. No attempt will be made here to offer a comprehensive history of the period, or deal with every Christian sanctuary in the Holy Land. To the contrary, just a few examples will be cited here. Even so, we believe that the “aftershocks” of ‘temple theology’ in the following examples will prove instructive and are worthy of our attention.

2. THE EARLIEST CHRISTIAN PILGRIMS TO JERUSALEM.

- a. From the earliest days of Christianity, those who bore the name of Christ made *pilgrimages* to the land of Israel—namely to Jerusalem, to worship and pray at the places where Christ instituted the Eucharist, was on trial, was crucified, laid in the Tomb, from which He arose on the third day, and from where He later ascended to heaven.¹¹⁶⁰

¹¹⁶⁰ See especially: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Books 8-10. One of the finest studies is that of Bargil Pixner, who served as Prior of the Benedictine Abbey on Mount Zion for many years: *Paths of the Messiah and Sites of the Early Church from Galilee to Jerusalem: Jesus and Jewish Christianity in Light of Archaeological Discoveries*. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010). Also by Pixner: “Church of the Apostles Found on Mount Zion,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 16:3 (1990): 16-35. Additionally, see: Bernardino Amico, *Plans of the Sacred Edifices of the Holy Land*. SBF Collectio Maior [Major Collection] 10. Translated by Bellorini, T. and Hoade, Eugene (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1953); David Kroyanker, *Jerusalem Architecture* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994); Richard M. Mackowski, *Jerusalem: City of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); W. Telfer, “Constantine’s Holy Land Plan,” *Studia Patristica*, vol. 1, Texte und Untersuchungen [Texts and Studies] 63 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1955), 696-700; Robert Wilken, *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1992); Peter W. Walker, *Holy Land, Holy Places? Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century*. Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Blake Leyerle, “Pilgrims to the Land: Early Christian Perceptions of Galilee,” 345-358 in *Galilee through the Centuries: Confluence of Cultures*. Ed. by Meyers, Eric M.. Duke Judaic Studies 1 (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1999); Oded Irshai, “The Christian Appropriation of Jerusalem in the Fourth Century: The Case of the Bordeaux Pilgrim,” *Jewish Quarterly*

- b. Eusebius writes of Alexander, Bishop of Cappadocia, who visited Jerusalem in 212 A.D. “to see the historic sites.”¹¹⁶¹ He writes of Bethlehem as:
- “The place of His birth, which is to-day so famous *that men still hasten from the ends of the earth to see it*, but shouted it out with the greatest clearness.”¹¹⁶²
- c. Elsewhere, Eusebius remarks that the *ruins of Jerusalem* were of significance for those visiting Jerusalem, specifically “objects of Jewish reverence,” by which he means the Temple:
- “And I have pointed out that only from the date of our Savior Jesus Christ’s Coming among men have the objects of Jewish reverence, *the hill called Zion and Jerusalem, the buildings there, that is to say, the Temple, the Holy of Holies, the Altar, and whatever else was there dedicated to the glory of God*, been utterly removed or shaken ...”¹¹⁶³
- d. One of the earliest records of Christian visitors to the Christian sanctuaries and holy sites in ancient Jerusalem is that of the *Bordeaux Pilgrim*:
- “... A Christian visitor in 333 [A.D.] saw a great stone which was revered by the Jews—the *foundation stone* that had been under the *Holy of Holies*: at the temple site ‘stand two statues of Hadrian, and not far from them, a pierced stone, which the Jews come and anoint every year. They mourn and rend their garments and then depart.’”¹¹⁶⁴
- e. However, many Christian shrines were destroyed during the persecutions of the Roman emperor Diocletian (302-05 A.D.).
- “The destruction had begun after the Imperial Council at Nicomedia in 302 [A.D.] which resolved to suppress Christianity throughout the empire ... After Diocletian abdicated in 305 [A.D.], the persecution continued under Galerius and Maximian until the Edict of Milan, issued by Constantine in 313 [A.D.] established religious freedom throughout the empire ... In their new-found freedom, the Christians built many churches *and described them with temple imagery*.”¹¹⁶⁵
 - “Texts from the *Psalms* about ‘entering the house of the Lord’ were applied in the new churches, but Eusebius also included the older belief

Review 99 (2009): 465-486; J. W. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades* (Warmister: Aris and Phillips, 2002).

¹¹⁶¹ Eusebius, *An Ecclesiastical History*, 6.10. “He performed a journey from Cappadocia, where he was first made bishop, to Jerusalem, in consequence of a vow and the celebrity of the place. Whilst he was there, most cordially entertained by the brethren, who would not suffer him to return home, another revelation also appeared to them at night, and uttered a most distinct communication to those that were eminent for a devoted life.”

¹¹⁶² Eusebius of Cæsarea, *The Proof of the Gospel: Being the Demonstratio Evangelica of Eusebius of Cæsarea*, ed. W. J. Sparrow-Simpson and W. K. Lowther Clarke, trans. W. J. Ferrar, vol. 1, *Translations of Christian Literature: Series I: Greek Texts* (London; New York: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; The Macmillan Company, 1920), 3.

¹¹⁶³ Eusebius of Cæsarea, *Proof of the Gospel*: 8:1.

¹¹⁶⁴ Pilgrim of Bordeaux, cited in: J. W. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades* (Warmister: Aris and Phillips, 2002). See: Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Theology*, 61.

¹¹⁶⁵ Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Theology*, 64.

*that the Christian community was the living temple ... The Cathedral at Tyre was described as a temple, and the place of the altar described as a temple: there were fountains in the courtyard before the ‘temple’ and the place of the altar was called the Holy of Holies. Its doors were in the east end, and its sanctuary in the west, exactly as it was in the Second Temple.”*¹¹⁶⁶

3. (RE)BUILDING THE CHRISTIAN ‘TEMPLES.’

- a. It was St. Helena, Constantine’s devout mother, who traveled to Jerusalem at her emperor-son’s behest, “along with Constantine’s architects and master builders and they immediately began *three great building projects.*”¹¹⁶⁷
 - First, in Bethlehem, the cave of the Nativity of Christ was cleaned and renovated, “and above it an enormous basilica was raised.”¹¹⁶⁸
 - Second, in Jerusalem, the so-called Temple of Jupiter, which was constructed over Golgotha in 132 A.D, at the order of Hadrian, the Roman emperor at the time, was demolished. “They started digging away the temple platform beneath it.”¹¹⁶⁹
 - Third, on the Mount of Olives, a sanctuary was raised, dedicated to the Ascension of Christ.¹¹⁷⁰
- b. “In the years following Constantine’s reign, other large basilicas were erected, one after the other, on all the important scenes of the Gospel stories, and even on many Old Testament sites. Just as the [liturgy] was formed to celebrate the entire history of salvation, so the land of Israel became *the living illustrated Bible*, containing the scenes ... of sacred history—first and foremost scenes of *the Word-become flesh.*”¹¹⁷¹
- c. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was “*intended as a new temple*, with its *Holy of Holies* in the west and its doors facing east.”¹¹⁷²
 - “[Constantine] first of all decked out the sacred cave ... On the side opposite the cave, which looked towards the rising sun, *was connected to the royal temple*, an extraordinary structure of immense height and very extensive in depth and breadth.”¹¹⁷³
- d. The Holy Sepulchre was dedicated in 335 [A.D.], on 13 September 13, “*just as Solomon had dedicated his temple at the great autumn festival.*”¹¹⁷⁴
 - **Pilgrim of Egeria:** “Those are called the days of dedication when the holy church which is in Golgotha, and which they call the martyrrium, was consecrated to God; the holy church also which is at the Anastasis, that is, in the place where the Lord rose after His Passion, was

¹¹⁶⁶ Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Theology*, 64.

¹¹⁶⁷ Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 434.

¹¹⁶⁸ Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 434.

¹¹⁶⁹ Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 184.

¹¹⁷⁰ Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 434.

¹¹⁷¹ Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 435.

¹¹⁷² Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Theology*, 64.

¹¹⁷³ *Life of Constantine* 3.33. Cited in: Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Theology*, 65.

¹¹⁷⁴ Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Theology*, 65. See: *I Ki.* 6:37-38.

consecrated to God on that day. The dedication of these holy churches is therefore celebrated with the highest honor, because the Cross of the Lord was found on this same day. And it was so ordained that, when the holy churches above mentioned were first consecrated, that should be the day when the Cross of the Lord had been found, in order that the whole celebration should be made together, with all rejoicing, on the self-same day. *Moreover, it appears from the Holy Scriptures that this is also the day of dedication, when holy Solomon, having finished the House of God which he had built, stood before the altar of God and prayed, as it is written in the books of the Chronicles.*¹¹⁷⁵

- e. There is an apocryphal story in the *Testament of Solomon*, a Jewish text attributed to Solomon, but composed in the first to third centuries A.D. The strange story relates how Solomon was bothered in the building of his Temple by demons, and had allegedly obtained power over them by a “magic ring.”¹¹⁷⁶ The reason that this apocryphal tale is worth any mention at all is this: the pilgrim Egeria testified that she *was shown the ring* in her visit to the Holy Sepulcher:
- **Egeria:** “And as all the people pass by one by one, all bowing themselves, they touch the Cross and the title, first with their foreheads and then with their eyes; then they kiss the Cross and pass through, but none lays his hand upon it to touch it. When they have kissed the Cross and have passed through, a deacon stands *holding the ring of Solomon* and the horn from which the kings were anointed; *they kiss the horn also and gaze at the ring ...*”¹¹⁷⁷
- f. Moreover, according to a Jewish Targum¹¹⁷⁸ known as *Pseudo-Jonathan*, the death of Adam took place on the Temple mount. Thus, Egeria was likely shown the place in the Holy Sepulchre which commemorated the death of Adam—strategically placed *directly under the altar of Golgotha*. Whatever historical validity this legend has is dubious, but the theology of it is splendidly developed in an early Christian homily from Holy Saturday:
- “*What is happening?* Today there is a great silence over the earth, a great silence, and stillness, a great silence because the King sleeps; the earth was in terror and was still, *because God slept in the flesh and raised up those who were sleeping from the ages. God has died in the flesh, and the underworld has trembled.*”

¹¹⁷⁵ Pilgrim of Egeria, Diary, 48.2. (Source: <http://www.ccel.org/m/mcclure/etheria/etheria.htm>.) See: *II. Chron.* 7:8-9 “At that time Solomon held the feast for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt. And on the eighth day they held a solemn assembly; for they had kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days.” For the precise date of the dedication of Solomon’s Temple, see: *I Ki.* 6:37-38.

¹¹⁷⁶ See: *Testament of Solomon*, in: James Charlesworth, ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. (London: Darton Longman and Todd), 1983, vol. 1.

¹¹⁷⁷ Pilgrim of Egeria, Diary, 48.2. (Source: <http://www.ccel.org/m/mcclure/etheria/etheria.htm>.)

¹¹⁷⁸ In brief, a “Targum” was an Aramaic translation (and interpretation) of the Hebrew Scriptures. The one under consideration here is known as the *Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan*.

Truly he goes to seek out our first parent like a lost sheep; he wishes to visit those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. *He goes to free the prisoner Adam and his fellow-prisoner Eve from their pains, he who is God, and Adam's son.*

The Lord goes in to them holding his victorious weapon, his cross. When Adam, the first created man, sees him, he strikes his breast in terror and calls out to all: 'My Lord be with you all.' And Christ in reply says to Adam: 'And with your spirit.' And grasping his hand he raises him up, saying: 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.

I am your God, who for your sake became your son, who for you and your descendants now speak and command with authority those in prison: Come forth, and those in darkness: Have light, and those who sleep: Rise.

I command you: Awake, sleeper, I have not made you to be held a prisoner in the underworld. Arise from the dead; I am the life of the dead. Arise, O man, work of my hands, arise, you who were fashioned in my image. Rise, let us go hence; for you in me and I in you, together we are one undivided person.

For you, I your God became your son; for you, I the Master took on your form; that of slave; for you, I who am above the heavens came on earth and under the earth; for you, man, I became as a man without help, free among the dead; for you, who left a garden, I was handed over to Jews from a garden and crucified in a garden.

Look at the spittle on my face, which I received because of you, in order to restore you to that first divine inbreathing at creation. See the blows on my cheeks, which I accepted in order to refashion your distorted form to my own image [CCC #518].

See the scourging of my back, which I accepted in order to disperse the load of your sins which was laid upon your back. See my hands nailed to the tree for a good purpose, for you, who stretched out your hand to the tree for an evil one.

I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side, for you, who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side healed the pain of your side; my sleep will release you from your sleep in Hades; my sword has checked the sword which was turned against you ...

But arise, let us go hence. The enemy brought you out of the land of paradise; I will reinstate you, no longer in paradise, but on the throne of heaven. I denied you the tree of life, which was a figure, but now I myself am united to you, I who am life. I posted the cherubim to guard you as they would slaves; now I make the cherubim worship you as they would God.

The cherubim throne has been prepared, the bearers are ready and waiting, the bridal chamber is in order, the food is provided, the everlasting houses and rooms are in readiness; the treasures of good

things have been opened; the kingdom of heaven has been prepared before the ages.”¹¹⁷⁹

- Along with this, is the Holy **Saturday Responsorial**:
Our shepherd, the source of the water of life, has died.
The sun was darkened when he passed away.
But now man's captor is made captive.
This is the day when our Savior broke through the gates of death.
He has destroyed the barricades of hell,
overthrown the sovereignty of the devil.
This is the day when our Savior broke through the gates of death.

IV. TEMPLE THEOLOGY AND THE CHRISTIAN WORSHIP. *Having examined some of the ways in which the early Christians understood their “sacred spaces”—especially those of the Holy Land, in the light of the temple, let us now make a few final remarks about the sacraments within the early Church.*

1. THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

- a. According to Eusebius, when Constantine had a statue of himself erected in Rome, his figure was depicted *holding a cross in his hand*
 - “in the most public place at Rome, he commanded the following inscription to be written in the Roman tongue, as follows: ‘*By this salutary sign, the true ornament of bravery, I have saved your city, liberated from the yoke of the tyrant. Moreover, I have restored both the Senate and the Roman people to their ancient dignity and splendour.*’¹¹⁸⁰
- b. Eusebius’ account goes some distance to show “the triumph” of the Cross,” especially as it concerns its eventual vindication from Roman persecution, paradoxically from the decree of one of its own emperors!
- c. Yet we must go must further. Ratzinger summarizes:
 - The most basic Christian gesture in prayer *is and always will be the sign of the Cross*. It is a way of confessing Christ crucified with one’s very body, in accordance with the programmatic words of St. Paul: ‘[W]e preach Christ Crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God’¹¹⁸¹ ... Whenever we make the sign of the Cross, we accept our Baptism anew; Christ from the Cross draws us, so to speak, to himself and thus into communion with the living God ...’¹¹⁸²
- d. Ratzinger identifies it as a confession of Christian faith:
 - “The sign of the Cross is a confession of faith: *I believe in him* who suffered for me and rose again; in him who has transformed the sign of shame into a sign of hope and of the love of God that is present with us. The confession of faith is a confession of hope: *I believe in him* who in his

¹¹⁷⁹ Ancient Homily for Holy Saturday. (For an abbreviated version, see: CCC # 636; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., 164).

¹¹⁸⁰ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 9.9.

¹¹⁸¹ *I Cor.* 1:23ff.

¹¹⁸² Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 178.

weakness is the Almighty; in him who can and will save me even in apparent absence and impotence.”¹¹⁸³

- e. Finally, he describes the protection which the Cross offers the disciple:
- “By signing ourselves with the Cross, *we place ourselves under the protection of the Cross*, hold it in front of us like a shield that will guard us in all the distress of daily life and give us the courage to go on. We accept it as a signpost that we follow: ‘If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.’¹¹⁸⁴ The Cross shows us the road of life—the imitation of Christ.¹¹⁸⁵
- f. Returning to early Christianity, we may begin to grasp how the Cross was, especially for Jewish Christians,
- “something more than the wood on which Jesus was crucified. *It is a spiritual, mysterious, living reality* which accompanies the risen Christ.”¹¹⁸⁶
- g. Similarly, St. Justin Martyr describes the Cross as “the greatest symbol of [Christ’s] power and rule.”¹¹⁸⁷ As such, Justin sees *the sign of the Cross* in countless examples of the visible world:
- Justin: “For consider all the things in the world, whether without this form they could be administered or have any community. For the sea is not traversed except that trophy which is called a sail abide safe in the ship; and the earth is not ploughed without it: diggers and mechanics do not their work, except with tools which have this shape.¹¹⁸⁸
- h. Jewish Christians especially, in meditating upon the Cross of Christ, saw in the Old Testament a *typology of the Cross*. One thinks first of Jesus words in *John’s Gospel*:
- John 3:14 “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up,¹¹⁸⁹
- i. Another key type of the Cross from the Hebrew Scriptures is the following:
- **Ezek. 9:4** “And the LORD said to him, ‘Go through the city, through Jerusalem, and *put a mark* [Hebrew: *tau*] *upon the foreheads* of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.’”
- j. Strikingly, in the above example from *Ezekiel*, the term translated in the English as “mark” is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet—*tau* [ט].
- k. In *Revelation*, this “mark” on the forehead of the elect reappears:
- **Rev. 22:4** “They shall see his face, *and his name shall be on their foreheads.*”

¹¹⁸³ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 177.

¹¹⁸⁴ *Mark* 8:34: “And he called to him the multitude with his disciples, and said to them, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

¹¹⁸⁵ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 177–178.

¹¹⁸⁶ Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, Trans. and ed., John A. Baker (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1964), 270.

¹¹⁸⁷ Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 55 (in: *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 1, 181).

¹¹⁸⁸ Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 55.

¹¹⁸⁹ See: *Num.* 21:8-9. Daniélou: “The type is found in all the collections [of the Church fathers]” (In: *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 271).

1. Not only this, but rightly sensing the interpretative move from the Old to the New Testament, Daniélou writes,
 - “That this mark was thought of as representing *the name of God*’s clear from [the text of *Revelation*]. But once the move had been made to Greek territory, the *X*¹¹⁹⁰ the sign of the divine Name, was no longer thought of as standing for Yahweh, *but for Christ*, and regarded as the first letter of *Xristos*.”¹¹⁹¹

2. THE LORD’S DAY.

- a. Let us recall our earlier discussion of “Sunday,” *the Lord’s Day*. We indicated that the early Christians distinguished their worship of Jesus, on “*the eighth day*” of Creation, from the Sabbath of their Jewish counterparts.¹¹⁹²
- b. To this we add that “Sunday” was also the *integration on one day* of three disparate elements of Jewish worship, which took place on different occasions.
- c. Specifically, in Judaism, “we have to distinguish (1) the daily prayer; (2) the weekly [liturgy]; and (3) the annual festivals:”¹¹⁹³
 - i. In Judaism, the first element—*prayer*, was typically private, and daily. *This aspect of worship took place in the temple.*
 - ii. The second element—*weekly liturgy*, consisted of a “liturgy of the Word,” as in the weekly Sabbath service. *This aspect of worship took place in the synagogue.*
 - iii. Finally, the third element—annual festivals, namely Passover, Tabernacles and Weeks (Pentecost), were the high holy days, in which case holy *sacrifices* were offered. *This aspect of worship took place in the temple.*¹¹⁹⁴
- d. In a fresh and unique elevation of these three Jewish traditions, the weekly Eucharistic liturgy of the early Christians preserved and integrated all three elements into one liturgy, the Sunday Mass.
- e. Let us re-consider these three elements in light of the Mass of the early Christians:
 - First, in the Mass, the early Christians gathered weekly for prayer, which was also private, but now decisively public, as an act of “confession,” and expressly offered in the body of the gathered Church.
- f. Second, in the Mass, the early Christians participated in weekly liturgy, which included the “*liturgy of the Word*,” with readings from the Old Testament, but most notably, the “memoirs of the Apostles”—the Gospels. This was *an act of proclamation* of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and it was followed by *exhortation*, i.e., the homily:
 - Justin Martyr: “And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles

¹¹⁹⁰ Here, the letter *X* stands for the Greek letter *Chi*.

¹¹⁹¹ Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 154.

¹¹⁹² See our discussion in an earlier chapter.

¹¹⁹³ Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 378-79.

¹¹⁹⁴ All three elements are discussed in Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 379.

or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things.”¹¹⁹⁵

- g. Third and finally, in the Mass, the early Christians participated in the Eucharistic sacrifice, the “*liturgy of the Eucharist*.” Whereas Jewish worshippers engaged in occasional sacrifices, for most, it was an annual pilgrimage to the temple. In contrast, the early Christians gathered each week, on “*the eight day of creation*,” to eat the Body and Blood of the Lamb of the New Passover:
- **St. Justin Martyr:** “Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons.”¹¹⁹⁶
 - **St. Augustine:** “He that offers the sacrifice of praise glorifies me, and in this way will I show him my salvation’ (*Psa. 50:23*). Before the coming of Christ, the flesh and blood of this sacrifice were foreshadowed in the animals slain; in the passion of Christ the types were fulfilled by the true sacrifice; after the ascension of Christ, this sacrifice is commemorated in the sacrament.”¹¹⁹⁷
 - **St. Cyprian of Jerusalem:** “Having learnt these things, and been fully assured that the seeming bread is not bread, though sensible to taste, but *the Body of Christ*; and that the seeming wine is not wine, though the taste will have it so, but *the Blood of Christ*: and that of this David sung of old, saying, ‘And bread strengthens man’s heart, to make his face to shine with oil,’¹¹⁹⁸ strengthen your heart by partaking thereof as spiritual, and make the face of your soul to shine.”¹¹⁹⁹
 - **St. John Chrysostom:** “For *when you see the Lord sacrificed, and laid upon the altar*, and the priest standing and praying over the Victim, and all the worshippers empurpled with that precious blood, *can you then think that you are still among men, and standing upon earth?*”¹²⁰⁰

¹¹⁹⁵ St. Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 67. In *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 186.

¹¹⁹⁶ St. Justin Martyr, “The First Apology of Justin,” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 186.

¹¹⁹⁷ St. Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichean*, 21:20.

¹¹⁹⁸ *Psa.* 103:15.

¹¹⁹⁹ St. Cyprian of Jerusalem, *Catecheses*, 22:9.

¹²⁰⁰ St. John Chrysostom. *On the Priesthood*, 3.4.

3. THE CELEBRATION OF EASTER.

- a. Easter celebrates the Resurrection of the Lord. Therefore, “the question whether the feast was retained from Judaism does not arise, for it is purely a celebration of the anniversary of Christ’s Passion and Resurrection.”¹²⁰¹
- b. On the other hand, it must be readily acknowledged that events of Holy Week are inextricably linked with the Jewish Passover, as all Four Gospels fully attest.¹²⁰²
- c. As Daniélou explains
 - ii. “The real problem concerns *the date of Easter*. From the second century onward there were two opposing opinions .. Now this difference of opinion sees to go back to Judaism ... Whatever discussion there may be about the date, there is no doubt that *Passover time was observed by Jewish Christians As the Feast of Christ’s Resurrection.*”¹²⁰³

4. INSIGHTS FROM THE DIDACHE: DAYS OF CHRISTIAN FASTING AND PRAYER.

- a. In the Jewish piety of Jesus’ day, prayer was done *three times a day*.¹²⁰⁴
- b. Beyond daily prayer, Jewish faithful prayed on Mondays and Thursdays in synagogues, homes and small gatherings.¹²⁰⁵
- c. Early Christians “fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays,”¹²⁰⁶ to distinguish themselves from Jews, who fasted on Mondays and Thursdays.

¹²⁰¹ Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 344. He explains: “[Judaism] at the time of Christ had two calendars, the official one, based on the lunar calendar, and the archaic priestly calendar. The Asiatic Christian use seems to correspond to the official Jewish calendar, in which the celebration of Passover *always fell on the evening of the 14th Nisan*. Here is a tradition, *certainly one of the oldest*, which *definitely goes back to Jewish Christianity*; but the other tradition, which was finally to oust the first, *and which placed Easter always on a Sunday*, also has a venerable authority. Eusebius sees it as an *Apostolic tradition* [see below]. It represents the immemorial practice of Palestine, Alexandria and Rome, *and appears to be related to the priestly calendar*, which always began the celebration of the Feast of Weeks on the Sunday after the Passover.” The reference to Eusebius is as follows: “There was a considerable discussion raised about this time, in consequence of a difference of opinion respecting the observance of the paschal season. *The churches of all Asia, guided by a remoter tradition, supposed that they ought to keep the fourteenth day of the moon for the festival of the Savior’s Passover*, in which day the Jews were commanded to kill the paschal lamb; and it was incumbent on them, at all times, to make an end of the fast on this day, on whatever day of the week it should happen to fall. *But as it was not the custom to celebrate it in this manner in the churches throughout the rest of the world, who observe the practice that has prevailed from apostolic tradition until the present time*, so that it would not be proper to terminate our fast on any other but the day of the resurrection of our Savior. *Hence there were synods and convocations of the bishops on this question; and all unanimously drew up an ecclesiastical decree, which they communicated to all the churches in all places, that the mystery of our Lord’s resurrection should be celebrated on no other day than the Lord’s day; and that on this day alone we should observe the close of the paschal fasts.*” (in: *Ecclesiastical History*, 5.23.1).

¹²⁰² See: *Matt.* 26:2, 17, 18, 19; *Mark* 14:1, 12, 14, 16; *Luke* 22:1, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15; *John* 12:1; 13:1, 18:28, 39:19:14.

¹²⁰³ Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 343-44.

¹²⁰⁴ *Dan.* 6:10 “When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem; and he got down upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously”; see also: *Psa.* 55:17. Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 387.

¹²⁰⁵ See: Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 387.

¹²⁰⁶ Skarsuane is correct in suggesting the suitability of Friday for Christian fasting, as a memorial of the Lord’s Passion. As to the reason he gives for Wednesday fasts: “It seems Wednesday as well as Friday were

- d. They prayed “at the times of *temple prayer*, at the third, sixth and ninth hour.”¹²⁰⁷
- e. The *Didache* presents instructions for prayer, including its version of the Lord’s Prayer.¹²⁰⁸ Just prior to the prayer itself, it specifies the days of fasting as Monday and Thursday:
 - **Didache 8:1** “You must not let your days of fasting be at the same time as those of the hypocrites. They fast on the second day of the Sabbath [*Monday*] and on the fifth day of the Sabbath [*Thursday*], so you should hold your fasts on the fourth day of the Sabbath [*Wednesday*] and on the Day of Preparation [*Friday*].”¹²⁰⁹
- f. Moreover, the *Didache* instructs that the Lord’s prayer should be recited “three times each day.”¹²¹⁰

V. SPOTLIGHT: GOING UP TO ‘THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.’

1. UNDER THE ROCK OF CALVARY.

- a. Regarding the Holy Sepulchre: the original first-century shrine at Golgotha and the tomb of Christ were excavated from under Hadrian’s Temple of Jupiter, imposed upon the Christians by the Roman emperor as a desecration and sign of his powerful persecution against them.
- b. “[Early] Christians in Jerusalem already knew that Calvary and Jesus’ tomb had been buried under Hadrian’s shrine. This is why Constantine’s architects launched their excavations in the first place. They knew what they were digging for.”¹²¹¹

days of special importance in the Essene calendar of the Qumran scrolls. Maybe *Didache’s* two days of fasting are closer to Judaism than the author would make us think” *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 388. This is possible, but inconclusive. What *is* sure is the early Christians developed their own weekly “rhythm” of set days of prayer and fasting from the earlier practices of Judaism. It is also sure that the “shift” in these days from Monday / Thursday to Wednesday / Friday were symbolic ‘breaks’ with the practices of Judaism.” *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 387. Likewise, Daniélou: “It has been noticed that these two days had a special importance in the priestly calendar used at Qumran ... it is therefore very probable that the choice of these two days of fast and assembly for worship is of Essene origin” in: *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 343. See also: Annie Jaubert, *The Date of the Last Supper* (New York: Alba House, 1965).

¹²⁰⁷ Barker, *Temple Themes in Early Christian Worship*, 20. See: *Didache* 20; *Acts* 2:15; 3:1; 10:9.

¹²⁰⁸ See: *Didache* 8:2.

¹²⁰⁹ *Didache* 8:1. Thomas O’Loughlin, *The Didache: A Window on the Earliest Christians* (London; Grand Rapids, MI: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; Baker Academic, 2010), 166.

¹²¹⁰ *Didache* 8:3. O’Loughlin, *The Didache*, 166.

¹²¹¹ As to the precise location of Golgotha, Skarsuane is helpful: “There are several indications that local [early] Christians knew the location of Calvary and [Christ’s] tomb ... and some of this evidence *may point to Jewish believers*. First, in Constantine’s day, as in ours, the place [of Calvary] is in the middle of the [Old City of Jerusalem], *in clear contradiction to the New Testament record that Christ was crucified and buried outside the city*. But this speaks to the location’s *authenticity: if anyone at a later time freely should invent the place of Jesus’ death*, he would choose a place outside the city of his own time, that is, outside of Agrippa’s third wall and outside Hadrian’s [*Aelia Capotolina, the name given to Jerusalem in the time of Hadrian, in the 130s A.D.*] In the 150s or 160s A.D. Melito of Sardis visited the Holy Land. Afterwards, he wrote in his *Paschal homily* [see above] that Christ was crucified ‘*in the middle*’ of Jerusalem. It contradicts the New Testament, *but it agrees perfectly with*

- c. In 1974, excavations revealed a portion of a pagan altar from Hadrian's Roman temple under the bedrock of Calvary, near the Chapel of the True Cross, in the Armenian section of the Holy Sepulchre.
- d. On a personal note, I have had several opportunities to stand on this pagan altar, at the invitation of the benevolent Armenian priest and custodian of this section of the present day Holy Sepulchre.
- e. Interestingly, the aforementioned excavations also unearthed a small piece of Christian graffiti near the pagan altar. It is from the second century, and bears the image of a small boat, presumably a symbol of the Christian pilgrims' mode of transportation.

2. 'LORD, LET US GO.'

- a. This graffiti includes a brief inscription, in Latin "*Domine Iuimus,*" or "*Lord, Let us go.*"
- b. The words of this inscription parallel the opening words of one of the *Psalms of Ascent*:

*«Laetatus sum in eo, quod dixerunt mihi:
«In domum Domini ibimus»»*

- c. In English, *Psalm 122* reads:
 - "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the House of the Lord!'"
- d. In the time of Jesus, these words of this Psalm of David were chanted by Jewish pilgrims, on their way up to Jerusalem, to "*the house of the Lord,*" the holy temple!
- e. Now, the early Christian pilgrims who made the inscription—chanted them *at the risk of martyrdom*. They were not going to Solomon's Temple for Passover or Tabernacles, but to *the temple of the New Solomon*, the crucified Jesus, whose Passover meal prepared His disciples for the full meaning of His crucifixion:
 - For the early Christians, like these pilgrims coming to Jerusalem, it was clear that Good Friday was the new Day of Atonement—of the eternal high priest, the true "lamb without blemish" (Exod. 12:5), whose blood was shed to take away the sins of the world.
- f. It was at this rock, the rock of Calvary, that the full meaning of the early Christians' inscription now becomes crystal clear:
 - This rock was the new Holy of Holies—the place of sacrifice had moved, from the Temple mount, to the site of a Roman execution.
- g. Regardless of how powerful Roman emperors could ignore or profane the altar of Calvary, this was the temple of the true king, the true high priest.
- h. Despite the risk even of death, countless more just like them would come, again and again, singing, "I was glad when they said to me, '*Let us go to the House of the LORD!*'"

Hadrian's temple within Aelia Capotolina! Most likely, local Christians had pointed out precisely this place to Melito." Cited in: Skarsuane, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 184.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: THE CHALLENGE OF TEMPLE THEOLOGY

This study has covered quite a bit of ground—from our opening definition of ‘temple theology,’ through the temple of creation, the tabernacle and temple of the Old Testament—and on into the New Testament, with new conceptions of the “meaning of the temple:”

- Firstly, for the New Testament, the Lord Jesus himself is the *Living Temple*;
- Secondly, the Church is the *New Temple*, with Christ as her cornerstone;
- Finally, the body—and heart of the Christian believer are the *Temple of the Holy Spirit*.

This is just a snapshot of the larger study, and we will not attempt to repeat the many insights which were presented herein. Our desire was not to “overwhelm” the reader with temple theology, nor “persuade” the reader of its legitimacy of temple theology ... the evidence speaks for itself. Given the depth of materials involved, and the breadth of sources drawn upon, we can only hope that the reader is a bit wiser with regard to *the richness and beauty that is temple theology*.

We make no claim that temple theology is the *only sort* of biblical theology—only that it *is* a sound biblical theology, and one that we hope will take the reader *back to Scripture again and again*.

It is hoped that this study has generated good questions—questions which the reader cannot, or will not ignore, as a student of Scripture. The following “set of questions” are not intended to replace the reader’s own questions, but only as further considerations for *reflection, contemplation, and perhaps even conversation* in one’s own *Temple Courtyard*.

❖ For the Catholic reader:

1. *To what extent do I / we need to better appropriate ‘temple theology’ in terms of understanding our own role in the Church, especially in terms of shaping culture, and “filling the world” with the Presence of God? What place do each of the Sacraments play all of this?*
2. *What importance does beauty have in my life? Sacred music?*
3. *For the priest:*
 - a) *What areas of my pastoral ministry / life need to be better attuned to ‘the mysteries of the temple’ in Scripture?*
 - b) *How well am I conveying, through Word and Sacrament, the ‘new temple’ that is Jesus Christ? ... The story of the Old Testament, especially as it relates to worship?*
4. *For the seminarian / student of theology: In what ways am I allowing the ‘temple theology’ of Scripture to shape my prayer? Study? Overall discernment process?*
5. *For the Catholic layperson:*
 - a) *If this has been my first serious study of biblical theology, what do I hope to do with these new insights?*

b) *What intrigued me the most? What part of the 'temple story' is still a bit unclear to me?*

❖ **For the (Non-Catholic) Christian reader:**

1. *To what extent do I / we need to better appropriate 'temple theology,' in terms of understanding our own role in the body of Christ, especially in terms of shaping culture, and "filling the world" with the Presence of God? What place does the Word of God play in this mission?*
2. *For clergy:*
 - a) *What areas of my pastoral ministry / life need to be better attuned to the 'new creation'?*
 - b) *How well am I conveying, especially through Scripture, the 'new creation' which Jesus brings?*
3. *If my tradition does not involved liturgical worship, especially centered around the sacraments (especially Baptism and Eucharist), what are some things are community can do to incorporate some of the insights from this study?*
4. *What makes a space 'holy?' What makes time 'holy?' What makes us 'holy?'*

5. For the Jewish reader:

1. *To what extent do I / we need to better appreciate the goodness of Creation? In what way are the texts of Genesis ... a blessing? A challenge?*
2. *What parts of this study spoke most powerfully to my own spirituality? Why?*
3. *How would I describe my own sense of "worship?" "Prayer?" What did feast days look like in my family growing up? What 'temple traditions' do I hope to impart with my family / children?*
4. *Do I celebrate Passover? Other festivals? How? What insights from ancient Judaism would I like to learn more about—or in some sense, re-appropriate today?*

6. For other readers:

1. *To what extent do I / we need to better appreciate the goodness of God's creation?*
2. *In what sense do I agree that our culture must recover a sense of Beauty?*
3. *What does 'sacred space' mean to me? 'Sacred time?'*
4. *How does music, especially sacred music, prepare me to worship God?*

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: THE LINE OF THE JEWISH HIGH PRIEST¹²¹²

1. Aaron (*Ezra* 7:1-5; *I Chron.* 5:30-40)
2. Eleazar (*Num.* 3:32; *Ezra* 7:1-5; *I Chron.* 5:30-40)
3. Phinehas (*Num.* 25:7, 11; *Josh.* 22:13; *Ezra* 7:1-5; *I Chron.* 5:30-40)
4. Abishua (*I Chron.* 6:5, 5, 50)
5. Bukki (*Num.* 34:22; *I Chron.* 6:5; *Ezra* 7:4)
6. Uzzi (*I Chron.* 6:5, 6, 51; 7:2, 3, 7)

With Eli the high-priesthood passes from the line of Eleazar to that of Ithamar:

Old Testament	Josephus, Antiquities
7. Eli (<i>I Sam.</i> 1:3ff)	Eli
8. Ahitub (<i>I Chron.</i> 9:11)	Ahitub
9. Ahiah (<i>I Sam.</i> 14:3)	Ahiah
10. Ahimelech (<i>I Sam.</i> 21:1)	Ahimelech
11. Abiathar (<i>I Sam.</i> 33: 6)	Abiathar

From Solomon to the Captivity. (With Zadok the line of Eleazar reappears.)

Old Testament.	Josephus Seder 'Olam Zuṭ a.
12. Zadok (<i>I Ki.</i> 3: 35)	Zadok Zadok
13. Ahimaaz (<i>II Sam.</i> 15: 36)	Ahimaaz Ahimaaz
14. Azariah (<i>I Ki</i> 4:2)	Azariah Azariah
15.	Joran Joash
16. Jehoiarib (<i>I Chron.</i> 9:10)	Jesus Joarib
17.	Axiomar Jehoshaphat
18. Jehoiada (<i>II Ki</i> 11:4) Joiada
19.	Phideas Pedaiah
20.	Sudeas Zedekiah
21. Azariah II. (<i>II Chron.</i> 24:17)	Joel Joel
22.	Jotham Jotham
23. Urijah (<i>II Ki</i> 16:10)	Uriah Uriah
24. Azariah III. (<i>II Chron.</i> 31:10)	Neriah Neriah
25.	Odeas Hoshaiah

¹²¹² Source: Jewish Encyclopedia (<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/7689-high-priest>).

Old Testament.	Josephus Seder 'Olam Zuṭ a.
26. Shallum (<i>I Chron.</i> 6:12)	Shallum Shallum
27. Hilkiah (<i>II Ki</i> 22: 4)	Hilkiah Hilkiah
28. Azariah IV. (<i>I Chron.</i> 6:13)	" Azariah
29. Seraiah (<i>II Ki</i> 25:18)	Sareas Zeraiah
30. Jehozadak (<i>I Chron.</i> 6:14)	Josedek Jehozadak
From the Captivity to Herod.	

Old Testament	Josephus
31. Jeshua (<i>Hag.</i> 1:1)	Jesus (<i>Antiq.</i> XI.3,10)
32. Joiakim (<i>Neh.</i> 12:10)	Joiakim (<i>War,</i> XI.5,1)
33. Eliashib (<i>Neh.</i> 3:1)	Eliashib (<i>War,</i> XI.5,5)
34. Joiada (<i>Neh.</i> 12:10, 22)	Judas (<i>Antiq.</i> XI.7,1)
35. Johanan (<i>Neh.</i> 12:22)	Joannes (<i>Antiq.</i> XI.7,1)
36. Jaddua (<i>Neh.</i> 12:22)	Jaddus (<i>Antiq.</i> XI.7, 2)
37.	Onias I. (<i>Antiq.</i> XII.2,5)
Old Testament	Josephus
38. Simon I. (<i>Sir.</i> 50:1)	Simon the Just (<i>Antiq.</i> XII.2,5)
39.	Eleazar (<i>Antiq.</i> XII.2,5)
40.	Manasseh (<i>Antiq.</i> XII.4, 1)
41.	Onias II. (<i>Antiq.</i> XII.4,1)
42.	Simon II. (<i>Antiq.</i> XII.4,10)
43. Onias (<i>I Macc.</i> 12: 7)	Onias III. (<i>Antiq.</i> XII.4,10)
44. Jason (<i>II Macc.</i> 4:7)	Jesus (<i>Antiq.</i> XII.5,1)
45. Menelaus (<i>II Macc.</i> 4:27)	Onias, called Menelaus (<i>Antiq.</i> XII. 5,1)
46. Alcimus (<i>I Macc.</i> 7:5)	Alcimus (<i>Antiq.</i> XII.9,7)
47. Jonathan (<i>I Macc.</i> 9:28)	Jonathan (<i>Antiq.</i> XIII.2,2)
48. Simon the Prince (<i>I Macc.</i> 14:46)	Simon (<i>Antiq.</i> XIII. 6,7)
49. John (<i>I Macc.</i> 16:23)	John Hyrcanus (<i>Antiq.</i> XIII. 8,1)
50.	Aristobulus I. (<i>Antiq.</i> XIII. 9,1)
51.	Alexander Jannæus (<i>Antiq.</i> XIII. 12,1)
52.	Hyrcanus II. (<i>Antiq.</i> XIII.16, 2)
53.	Aristobulus II. (<i>Antiq.</i> XV.1,2)
54.	Hyrcanus II. (restored) (<i>Antiq.</i> XIV. 4, 4)
55.	Antigone (<i>Antiq.</i> XIV.14,3)
56.	Hananeel (<i>Antiq.</i> XV. 2,4)

From Herod to the Destruction of the Temple.

Josephus, *Antiquities*
(Under Herod.)

56. Hananeel

57. Aristobulus III. (*Antiq.* XV.3,1, 3)

(Hananeel reappointed; *Antiq.* XV.3,3)

58. Jesus, son of Phabet (*Antiq.* XV. 9, 3)

59. Simon, son of Boethus (perhaps Boethus himself; *Antiq.* XV. 9,3; XVII.4,2)

60. Mattathias, son of Theophilus (*Antiq.* XVII.6,4)

Joseph, son of Ellem (one day; *Antiq.* XVII.6,4)

61. Joazar, son of Boethus (*Antiq.* XVII. 6,4)

(Under Archeiaus.)

62. Eleazar, son of Boethus (*Antiq.* XVII.13,1)

63. Jesus, son of Sie (*Antiq.* XVII.13,1)

(Joazar reappointed; *Antiq.* XVIII.1.1; 2,1)

(Under Quirinius.)

64. Ananus, son of Seth (*Antiq.* XVIII.2,2; *Luke* 3:2)

(Under Valorius Gratus.)

65. Ismael, son of Phabi (*Antiq.* XVIII. 2,2)

66. Eleazar, son of Ananus (*Antiq.* XVIII.2,2)

67. Simon, son of Camithus (*Antiq.* XVIII.2,2)

68. Joseph (called * **“Caiaphas”**) (*Antiq.* XVIII. 2,2; 4, 3; *Matt.* 26: 3, 57)

(Under Vitellius.)

69. Jonathan, son of Ananus (*Antiq.* XVIII.4,3; *War*, II. 12,5-6; 13,3)

70. Theophilus, son of Ananus (*Antiq.* XVIII.5,3)

(Under Agrippa.)

71. Simon, or Cantheras, son of Boethus (*Antiq.* XIX. 6,2)

72. Mattathias, son of Ananus (*Antiq.* XIX.6,4)

73. Elioneus, son of Cantheras (*Antiq.* XIX.8,1)

(Under Herod of Chalcis)

74. Joseph, son of Cainus (*Antiq.* XX.1,3)

[Perhaps Ishmael (*Ant* III.15,13) should be placed here.]

75. Ananias, son of Nebedeus (*Antiq.* XX.5,2)

(Jonathan restored; *Antiq.* XX.8,5)

(Under Agrippa II.)

76. Ishmael, son of Fabi (*Antiq.* XX.8,11)

77. Joseph Cabi, son of Simon (*Antiq.* XX.8,11)

78. Ananus, son of Ananus (*Antiq.* XX. 9,1)

79. Jesus, son of Damneus (*Antiq.* XX. 9, 1; *War*, VI. 2,2)

80. Jesus, son of Gamaliel (*Antiq.* XX. 9, 4, 7; an instance in which a priest betrothed to a widow before his elevation was permitted to marry her afterward)

81. Mattathias, son of Theophilus (*Antiq.* XX. 9, 7; *War*, VI. 2,2.)

82. Phinehas, son of Samuel, appointed by the people during the war (*Antiq.* XX.10, 1)

["A man altogether unworthy."]

Josephus enumerates only fifty-two pontificates under the Second Temple, omitting the second appointments of Hyrcanus II., Hananeel, and Joazar.

APPENDIX II: ILLUSTRATIONS

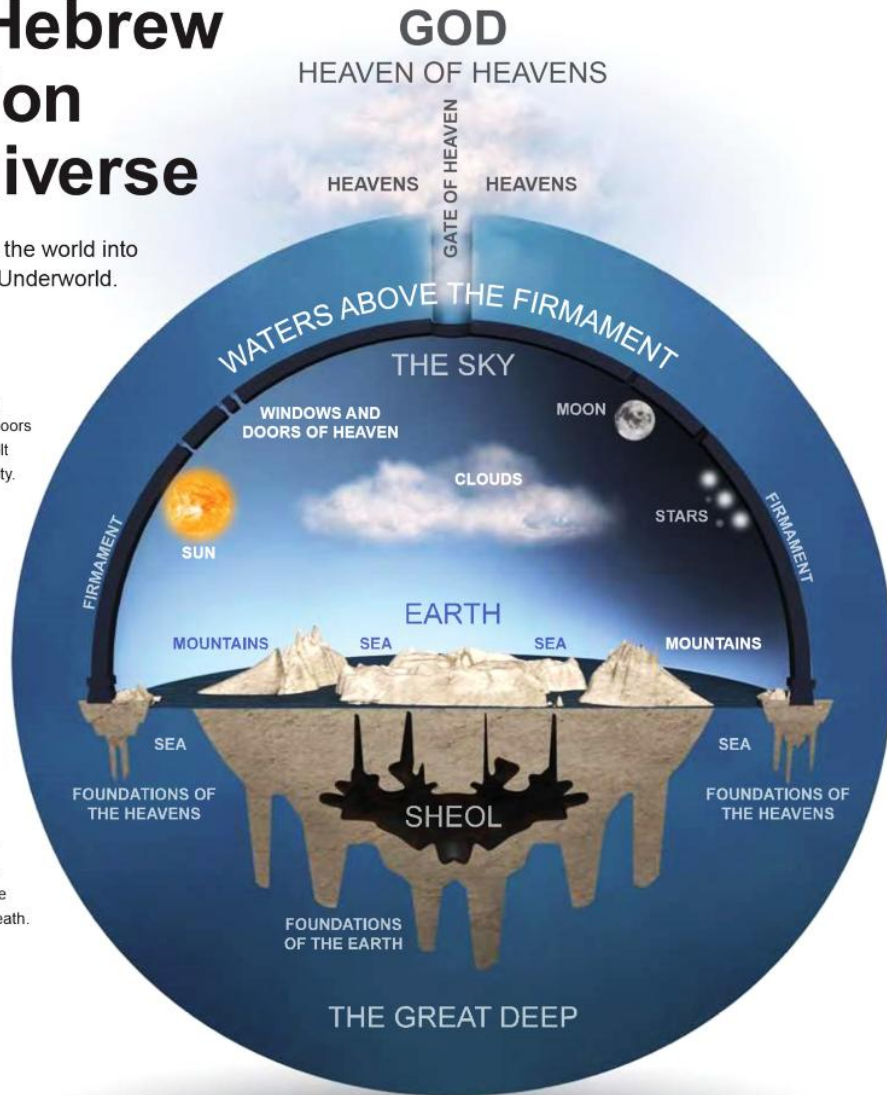
Ancient Hebrew Conception of the Universe

The ancient Israelites divided the world into Heaven, Earth, Sea, and the Underworld.

They viewed the sky as a vault resting on foundations—perhaps mountains—with doors and windows that let in the rain. God dwelt above the sky, hidden in cloud and majesty.

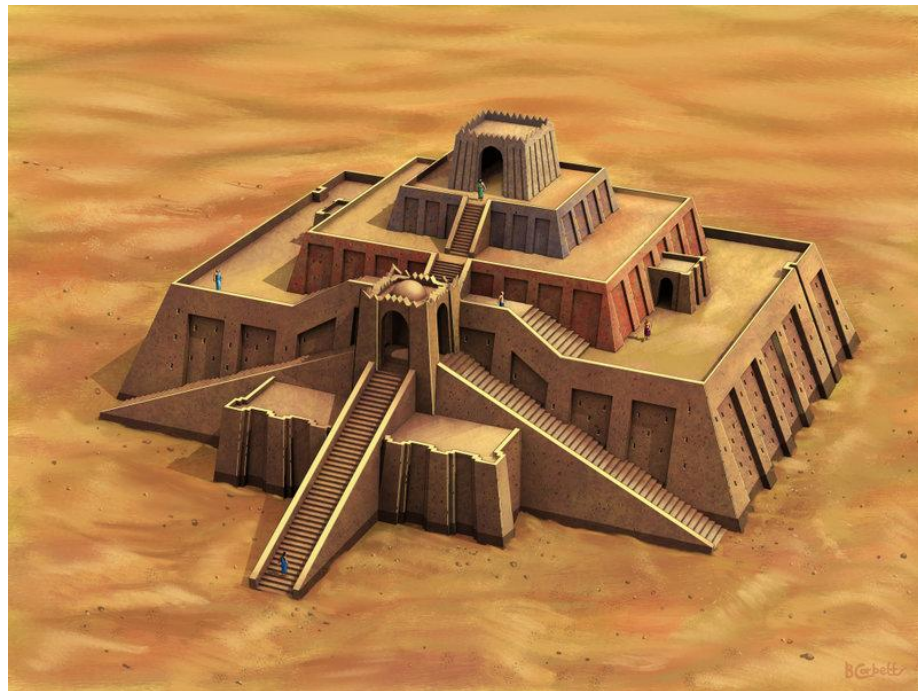
The world was viewed as a disk floating on the waters, secured or moored by pillars. The earth was the only known domain—the realm beyond it was considered unknowable.

The Underworld (Sheol) was a watery or dusty prison from which no one returned. Regarded as a physical place beneath the earth, it could be reached only through death.



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ANCIENT ZIGGURAT AT UR



Ziggurats are monumental temple-towers found throughout the area of ancient Mesopotamia. They were commonly built of sun-dried mud and straw bricks held in position with bitumen as mortar. Stairways ascended to the top of these structures, where a small temple/shrine sat on the summit. The illustration depicts the Ziggurat of Nanna at Ur, which was constructed

during the reign of Ur-Nammu (c. 2113–2095 B.C.). Its area covered 150 × 200 feet (46 × 61 m), and its height was 80 feet (24 m).¹²¹³

THE TOWER OF BABEL

Genesis indicates that the builders of Babel had discovered the process of making mud bricks and that they employed “bitumen for mortar” (10:3). Based on that invention, the builders decided “to build . . . a tower with its top in the heavens” (v. 4).

Genesis indicates that it is Ham’s descendants who are the unrighteous line—contrasted with Shem’s line, the righteous line that leads directly to Abram/Abraham. Ham’s line is charged with building the Tower of Babel—and receives considerably more attention than the line of Shem (and Japheth). Among Ham’s descendants are many of Israel’s enemies, such as the



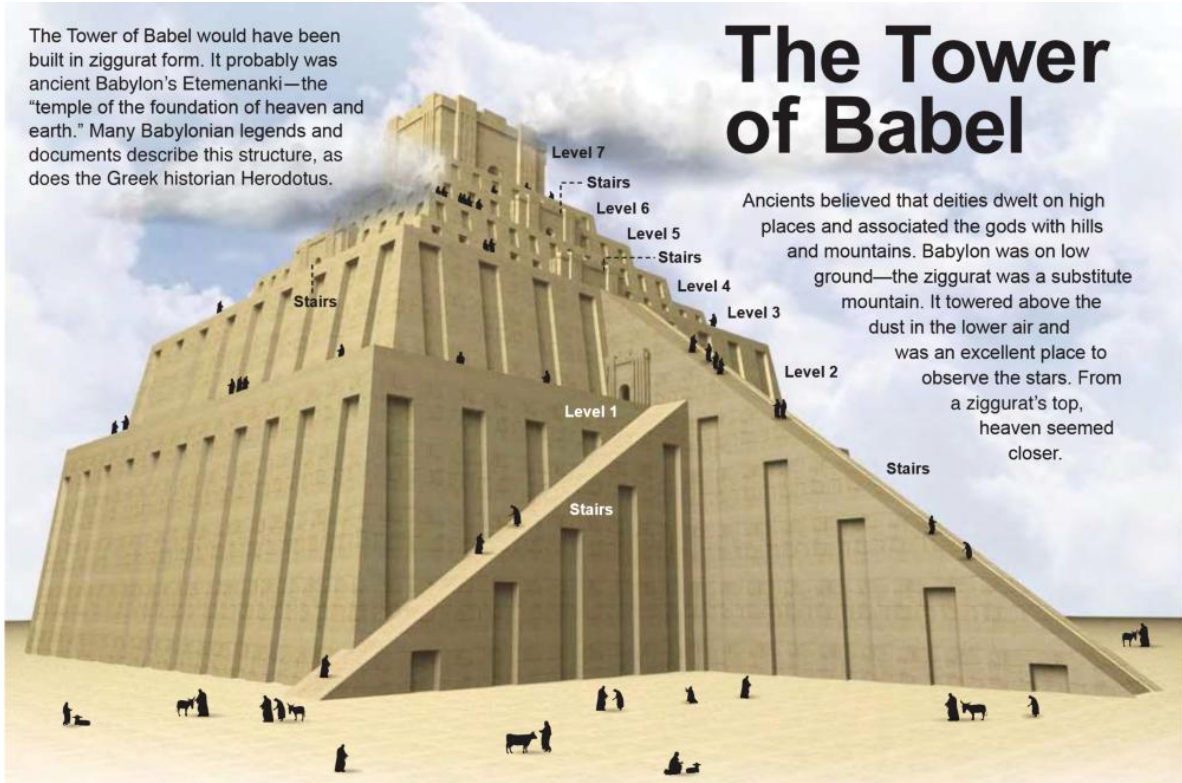
Egyptians, Babylonians, Philistines, and various Canaanite groups. Ham’s immediate sons are Cush, **Egypt**, Put, and **Canaan** (*Gen.* 10:6).

¹²¹³ Source: *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 68.

The Tower of Babel would have been built in ziggurat form. It probably was ancient Babylon's Etemenanki—the "temple of the foundation of heaven and earth." Many Babylonian legends and documents describe this structure, as does the Greek historian Herodotus.

The Tower of Babel

Ancients believed that deities dwelt on high places and associated the gods with hills and mountains. Babylon was on low ground—the ziggurat was a substitute mountain. It towered above the dust in the lower air and was an excellent place to observe the stars. From a ziggurat's top, heaven seemed closer.

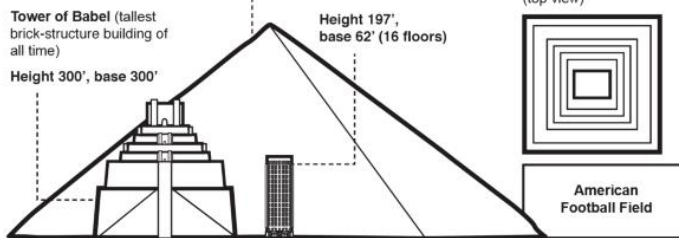


Size comparison (approximate):

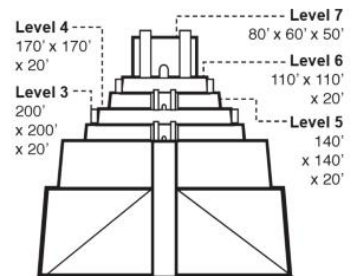
Great Pyramid of Giza (tallest building in the ancient world)
Height 480', base 755.5'

Tower of Babel (tallest brick-structure building of all time)
Height 300', base 300'

Monadnock Building in Chicago (tallest brick-structure building now standing)
Height 197', base 62' (16 floors)



The Esagila Tablet from Uruk describes the Etemenanki with these dimensions. The stairs for the top levels are interior.

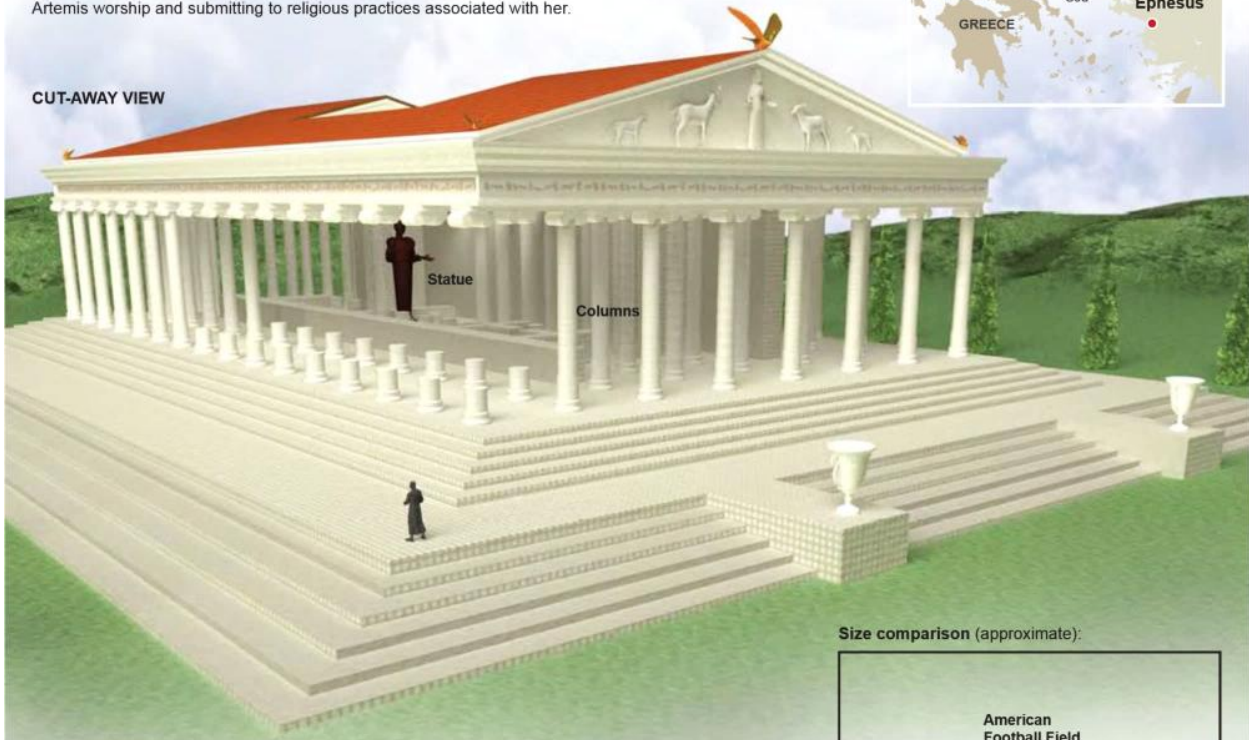


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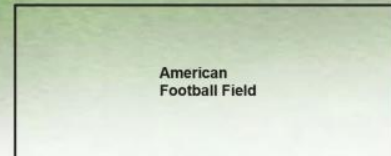
In Greek mythology, Artemis was known as the virgin archer-huntress, Apollo's sister, and one of the 12 Olympians. When Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he would have been concerned with the issues accompanying Artemis worship and submitting to religious practices associated with her.



CUT-AWAY VIEW

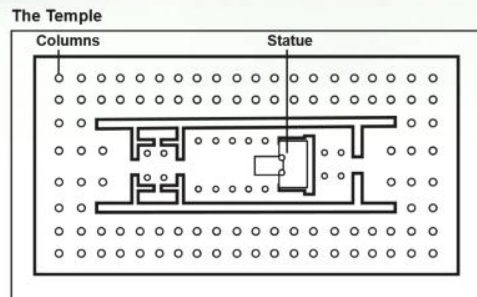


Size comparison (approximate):



The Temple of Artemis

This temple, called Artemision, was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Construction began in the mid-sixth century BC; more than a century later, it was the largest building in Rome, Greece, or Asia. Roughly four times the size of the Parthenon in Athens, it featured 127 columns, each measuring 60 ft. in height. It made Ephesus the center of Artemis worship.



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Manoah offered Yahweh a young goat and a grain offering upon a single stone (Judg 13:19).

When the Philistines returned the ark of the covenant to Israel, the people of Beth-shemesh made offerings upon a stone that was nearby (1 Sam 6:14–15).



A Single Stone Altar

The simplest kind of altar consisted of a rock of the right size and shape. Since the Israelites often used human-made altars, these simpler altars were only used in special circumstances, such as when they were away from the tabernacle.

In Exodus 20:25, Yahweh forbids using tools to shape altar stones. This prohibition may relate to keeping the stones in the form that God created them.

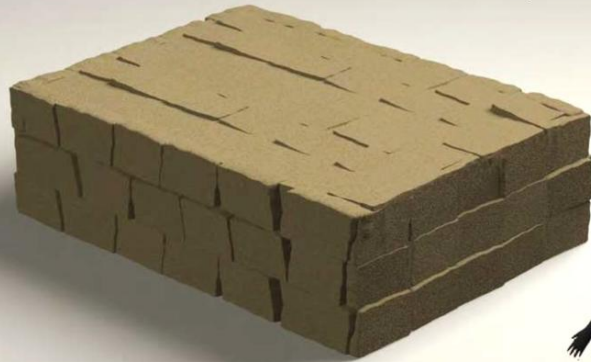
Altars of this type have been uncovered at Arad and on Mt. Ebal.



An Altar of Stones

The most common altar in the Old Testament consisted of unworked stone. Built either with clay and stone or out of stone only, these altars often included a flat rock on top (a hearthstone) to make lighting and maintaining a fire easier.

The Old Testament often records the building of an altar (see Gen 8:20; 13:18). These were likely earthen altars, or altars of clay and stone. The easiest altar to build, these were ideal for worshipers who did not plan to stay in an area for long.



An Altar of Earth

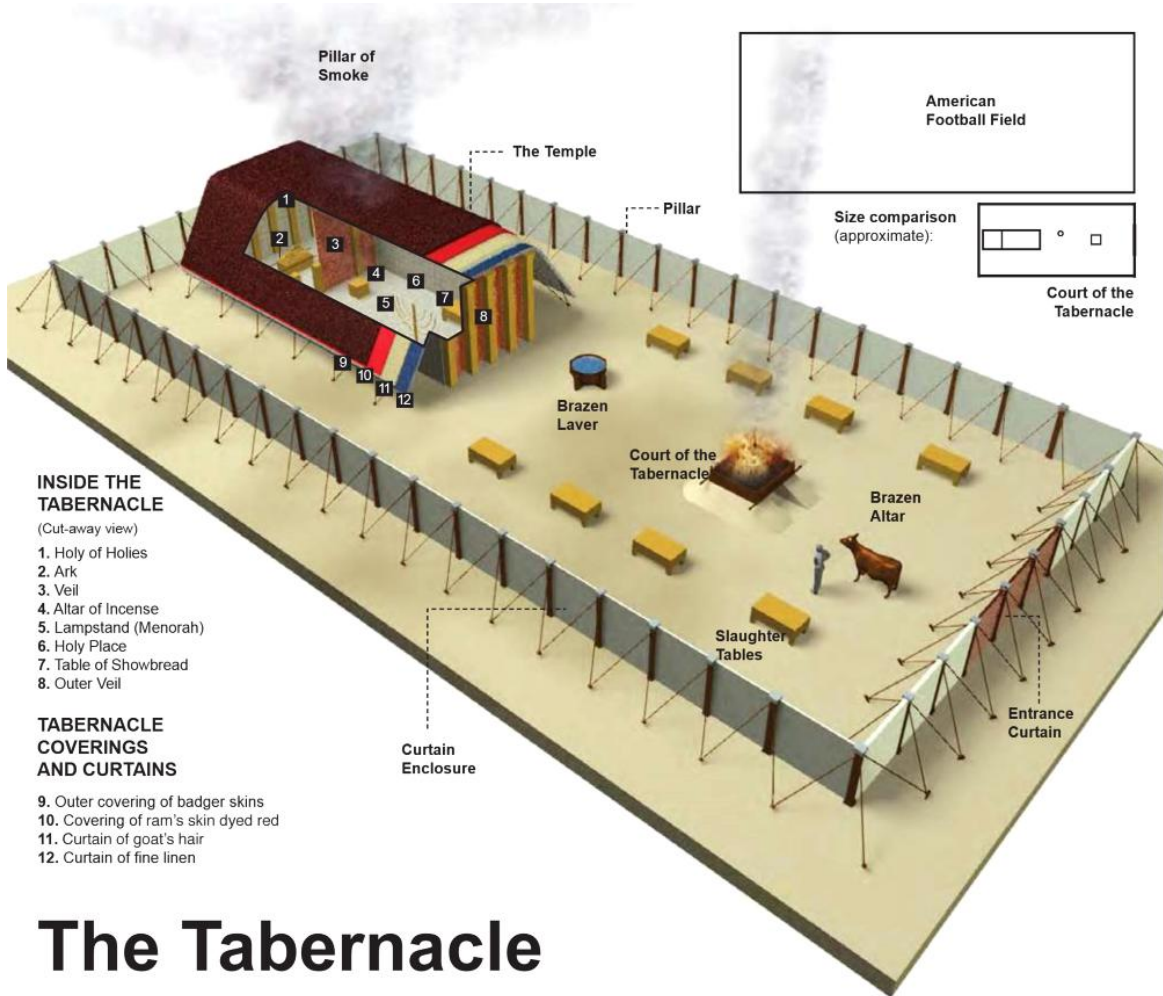
In Exodus 20:24, Yahweh commands Moses to build an altar of earth or clay. This may refer to blocks of sod or sun-fired mudbrick (Isa 65:3). However, many altars of earth likely included stones, just as many altars of unworked stone also included clay.

Examples of four-horned altars date back as far as 6000 BC. The horns of these altars symbolized animal horns, typically the horns of a bull. Bull imagery was often associated with deities throughout the ancient Near East. Numbers 23:22 and Isaiah 10:13 refer to Yahweh as a bull, while other scriptures refer to the "heat of his nostrils" to represent His anger (Exod 15:8; Psa 18:15; Job 4:9).



A Horned Altar

Exodus 38:2 describes four-horned altars. For specific rites of purification and atonement, sacrificial blood was smeared on the horns. The horns may have also served as points to secure ropes for tying the sacrifice to the altar.



INSIDE THE TABERNACLE
(Cut-away view)

- 1. Holy of Holies
- 2. Ark
- 3. Veil
- 4. Altar of Incense
- 5. Lampstand (Menorah)
- 6. Holy Place
- 7. Table of Showbread
- 8. Outer Veil

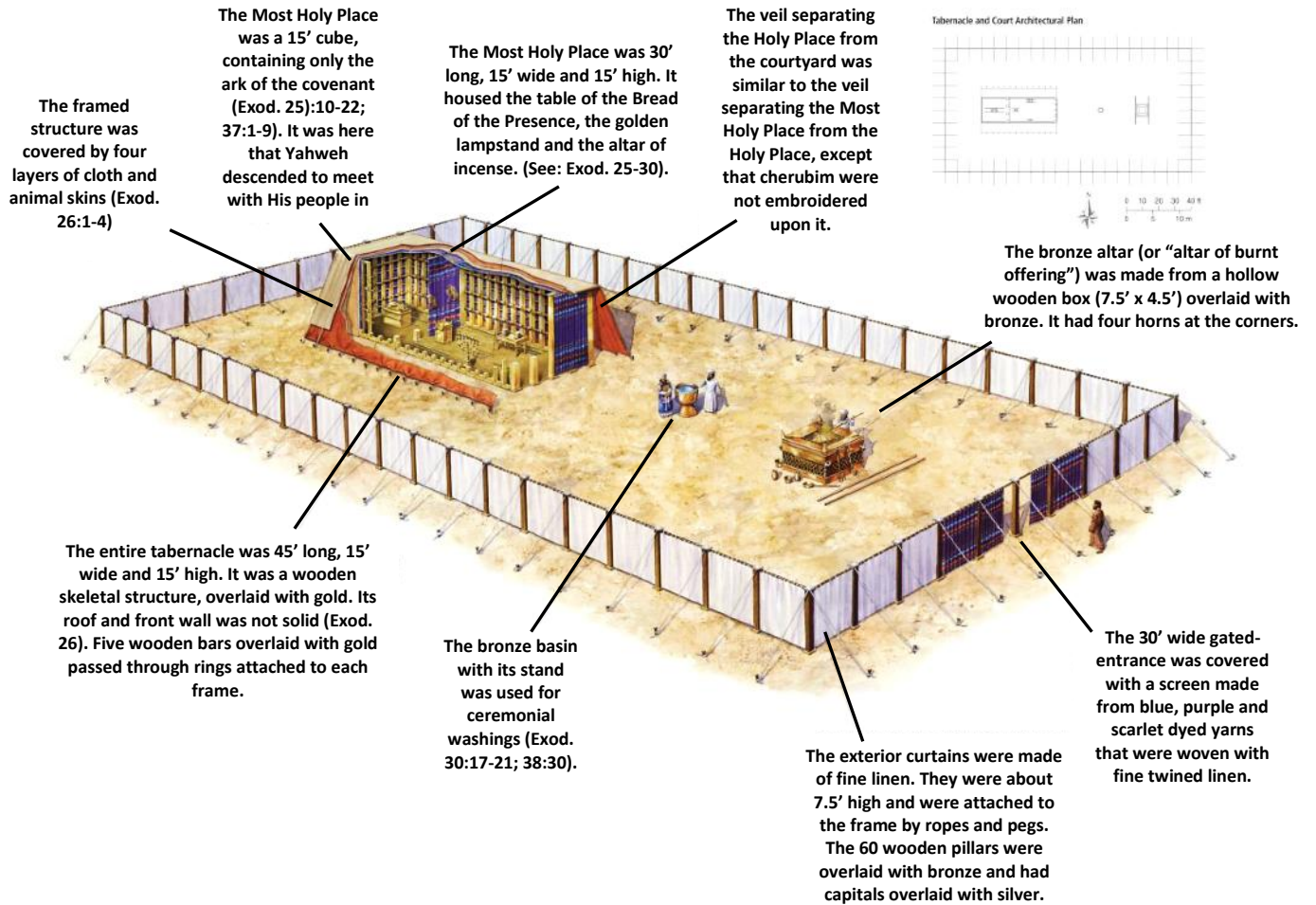
TABERNACLE COVERINGS AND CURTAINS

- 9. Outer covering of badger skins
- 10. Covering of ram's skin dyed red
- 11. Curtain of goat's hair
- 12. Curtain of fine linen

The Tabernacle

This portable temple was built in the wilderness by the Israelites circa 1450 BC after they were freed from Egyptian slavery. The tabernacle was the first temple dedicated to God and the first resting place of the ark of the covenant. It served as a place of worship and sacrifices during the Israelites' 40 years in the desert while conquering the land of Canaan.

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In the period of the Tabernacle, the **Ark of the Covenant** (Exod. 25:10–22; 37:1–9) was the *only* piece of furniture in the Most Holy Place. The Ark and its contents were hidden from view at all times.

The Ark was a wooden chest, overlaid with pure gold, measuring 3.75 feet long, 2.25 feet wide, and 2.25 feet high. It contained the two stone tablets of the Ten Commandments.

The author of *Hebrews* adds that it also contained "a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's staff that budded" (Heb. 9:4).

The ark was not to be touched by human hands. Two wooden poles, overlaid with gold, were used to transport it and were never removed from the Ark. The *mercy seat* was a solid golden slab that fitted perfectly on top of the Ark. The golden cherubim, which were hammered out of the same piece of gold, had wings outstretched over the mercy seat and faces that looked downward in holy awe. It was here that God spoke to Moses, the representative of the people of Israel.

INSIDE THE TABERNACLE

The Most Holy Place was a 15' cube, containing only the ark of the covenant (Exod. 25):10-22; 37:1-9). It was here that Yahweh descended to meet with His people in the glory cloud.

The framed structure was covered by four layers of cloth and animal skins (Exod. 26:1-4)

Table for the Bread of the Presence (Exod. 25:23-30).

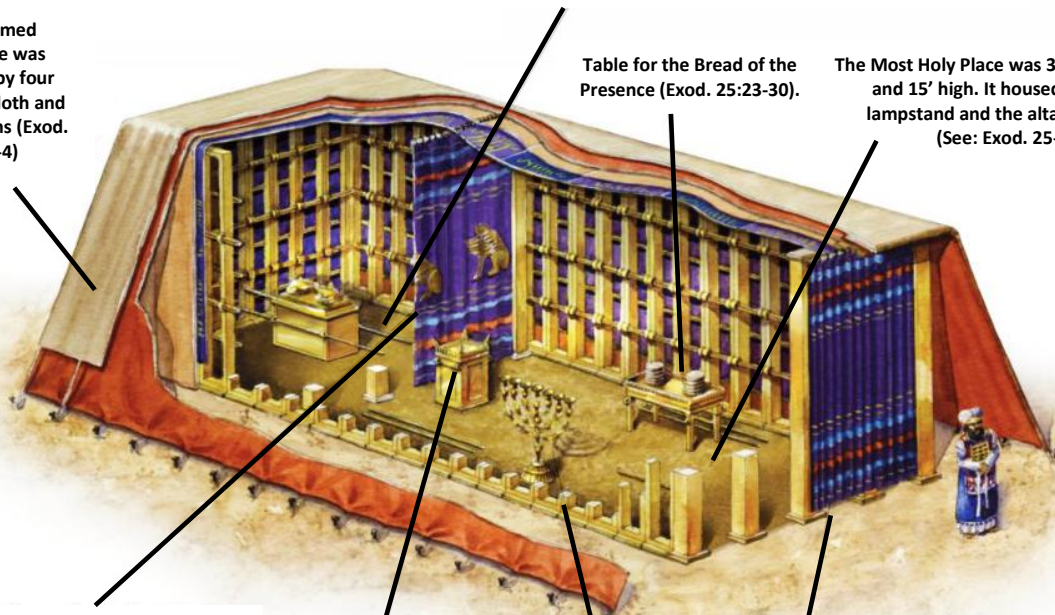
The Most Holy Place was 30' long, 15' wide and 15' high. It housed the golden lampstand and the altar of incense. (See: Exod. 25-30).

The veil separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place was made from blue, purple and scarlet dyed yarns woven with twined linen and embroidered with cherubim (Exod. 26:31-33). It hung on four golden pillars.

The Altar of Incense (Exod. 30:1-5; 37:25-29).

The Golden Lampstand (Exod. 25:31-40; 37:17-24).

The veil separating the Holy Place from the courtyard was similar to the veil separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place, except that cherubim were not embroidered upon it.

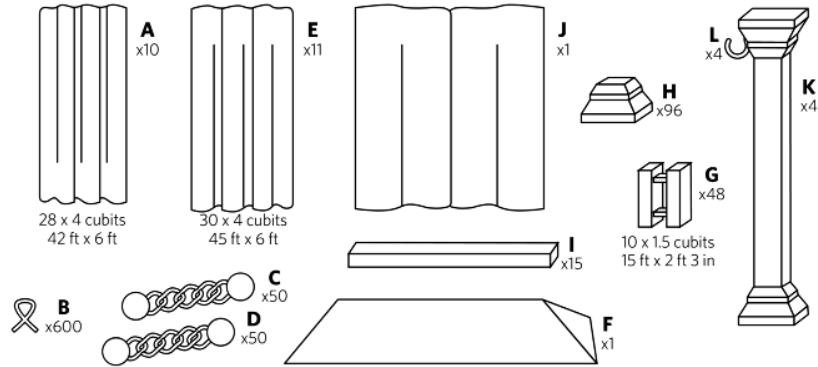


Build-It-Yourself Tabernacle Kit

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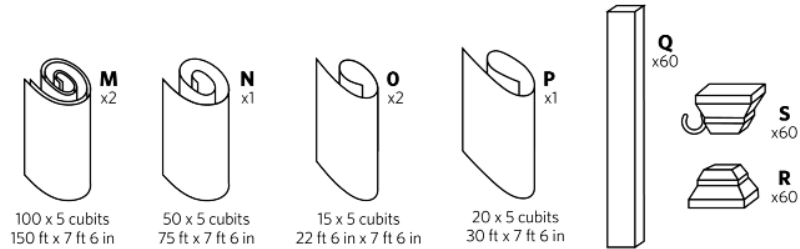
Tent (Exodus 26:1-37)

- A** Curtains x10
- B** Loops x600
- C** Clasps (Gold) x50
- D** Clasps (Bronze) x50
- E** Curtains (Goat's Hair) x11
- F** Tent covering x1
- G** Frame (Wood) x48
- H** Bases (Silver) x96
- I** Bar (Wood, Gold covered) x15
- J** Veil x1
- K** Pillars (Wood) x4
- L** Veil hooks (Gold) x4



Wall (Exodus 27:9-19)

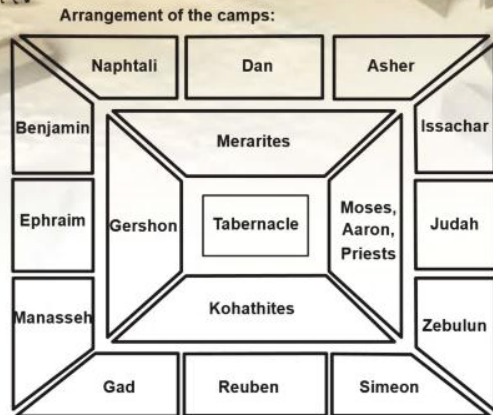
- M** Side Wall Sheet x2
- N** End Wall Sheet x1
- O** Gate Wall Sheet x2
- P** Gate Screen x1
- Q** Pillars (Bronze) x60
- R** Bases (Bronze) x60
- S** Hooks & Fillets (Silver) x60





The Israelite Encampment

The Book of Numbers describes the layout of the encampment during Israel's 40 years of wilderness wanderings (2:1–34). The tribes encamped around the tabernacle, both in order to stay close to the tent of meeting and to defend it during attack. The four sides were surrounded by four groups, led by Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan. The Levites—specially chosen to be close to God—camped around all sides of the tabernacle.



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Altar of burnt offering. Made of acacia wood and covered with bronze, the altar was light enough for the Levites to carry during the wilderness wanderings (Exod 27:1–8).



Bronze Basin. Cast of solid bronze, the basin was used for ceremonial washings (Exod 30:17–21).



Altar of Incense. Placed before the tabernacle curtain, this altar was used regularly to burn incense before Yahweh (Exod 30:1–10).



Table of Showbread. The bread of the Presence lay on it at all times (Exod 25:23–30).



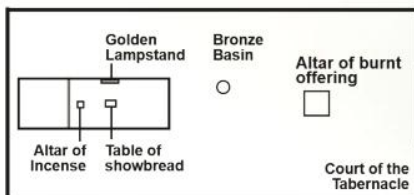
Furnishings of the Tabernacle

The book of Exodus details the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings. As Yahweh's sanctuary, the tabernacle served as God's dwelling place among the Israelites—the expression of the covenant between Yahweh and His people (Exod 25:8–9).



Golden Lampstand. A symbol of the tree of life, it held seven oil lamps (Exod 25:31–40).

Placement of Tabernacle Furnishings:



Ark of the Covenant. The holiest object of Israelite worship, the ark symbolized God's presence and contained the tablets of the Law (Exod 25:10–22).

As Yahweh's symbolic throne, the ark acted as a symbol of His going out before Israel in war. Its full name was "the ark of the covenant of Yahweh of hosts (of armies), who is enthroned on the cherubim" (1 Sam 4:3–5). The ark moved with God's people during the wilderness wanderings, was temporarily housed at Shiloh, and eventually dwelled in Solomon's temple—until the temple treasury was plundered by the Egyptians and Babylonians (1 Kgs 14:25–28; 2 Chr 36:7, 10, 18).



The Ark of the Covenant

As a symbol of God's presence with Israel, the Ark of the Covenant was the center of Yahweh worship and was brought into the temple each year at Passover (Psa 24:7–9). It housed the covenant tablets; an omer of manna and Aaron's budding staff were either set before the Ark or in it (1 Kgs 8:9; Heb 9:4).

MAXIMUS, BISHOP OF TURIN "What should we say that the Ark was not holy Mary, since the ark carried within it the tablets of the covenant, while Mary bore the master of the same covenant? The one bore the Law within itself and the other the gospel, but the ark gleamed within and without with the radiance of gold, while Holy Mary shone within and without with the splendor of virginity; *the one was adorned with earthly gold, the other with heavenly gold.*"

- *Homily 42:5*

ST. ATHANASIUS "Clothed with *purity instead of gold!* You are the ark in which is found the golden vessel containing *the true manna*, that is, the flesh in which divinity resides."

- *Homily of the Papyrus of Turin*

Catechism of the Catholic Church "Mary, in whom the Lord himself has just made his dwelling, is the daughter of Zion in person, the Ark of the Covenant, the place where the glory of the Lord dwells. She is *'the dwelling of God . . . with men.'*" (CCC# 2676)

The Priestly Garments

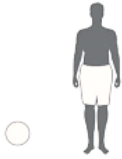
On Mount Sinai, Moses is instructed by God to gather his brother Aaron and Aaron's sons to be priests in the Holy Temple, built in 957 BC. To fulfill their duties, sacred garments are to be made at the highest standards of craftsmanship. In the generations of priests that follow, painstaking attention is paid to ensure every piece is woven and tailor-made to fit each priest.

MATERIALS

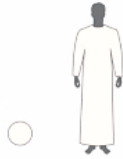
All pieces are made out of one or more of the following:

- Gold
- Linen
- Wool, in three colors

HIGH PRIEST'S ORDER OF DAILY DRESS



1. Pants
The priests can take their street clothes off only after they had put on the pants.



2. Tunic
The sleeves are made separately and are the only pieces sewn, not woven.



3. Belt
This combination of materials is only allowed for the priests' garments.



4. Robe
The hem is adorned with hollow wool "pomegranates" and gold bells.



5. Ephod
Made of all five materials, it is considered the most important garment.



6. Breastplate
It is set with 12 stones whose colors match the flags of the tribes of Israel.



7. Turban
A blue wool cap with gold bands may have been placed over the linen turban.



8. Crown
The thin plate of gold engraved with the raised words "Holy to the Lord."

HIGH PRIEST ON DAY OF ATONEMENT



1. Pants



2. Tunic
One for morning, one for evening



3. Belt
No wool embroidery



4. Turban
No blue cap with gold bands

ORDINARY PRIESTS' DAILY DRESS



1. Pants



2. Tunic



3. Belt
May have been embroidered



4. Turban
Placed on head, not wound on

A CLOSER LOOK

Putting on the turban consisted of taking a strip of linen approximately 24 feet long and winding it around the head.

Settings of gold on the shoulder straps of the ephod are fit for two sardonyx "remembrance" stones, each engraved with six names of the tribes of Israel, in order of their birth.

The Urim V'Tummim is the divine name of God written on a piece of parchment. Its presence allowed for the divine guidance received by the illumination of the letters on the stones.

The tunic is woven in a checkered knit pattern as opposed to a cross-weave pattern. The sleeves are woven separately, and then sewn on.

The bells made it easier to follow the priests' movements during service. There are as many as 72 wool pomegranates woven onto the hem of the robe.

The floor of the Temple is holy, and consequently the priests are to keep their feet bare.





¹ The leader of his brethren and the pride of his people was Simon the high priest, son of Onias, *who in his life repaired the house, and in his time fortified the temple.* ² He laid the foundations for the high double walls, the high retaining walls for the temple enclosure.

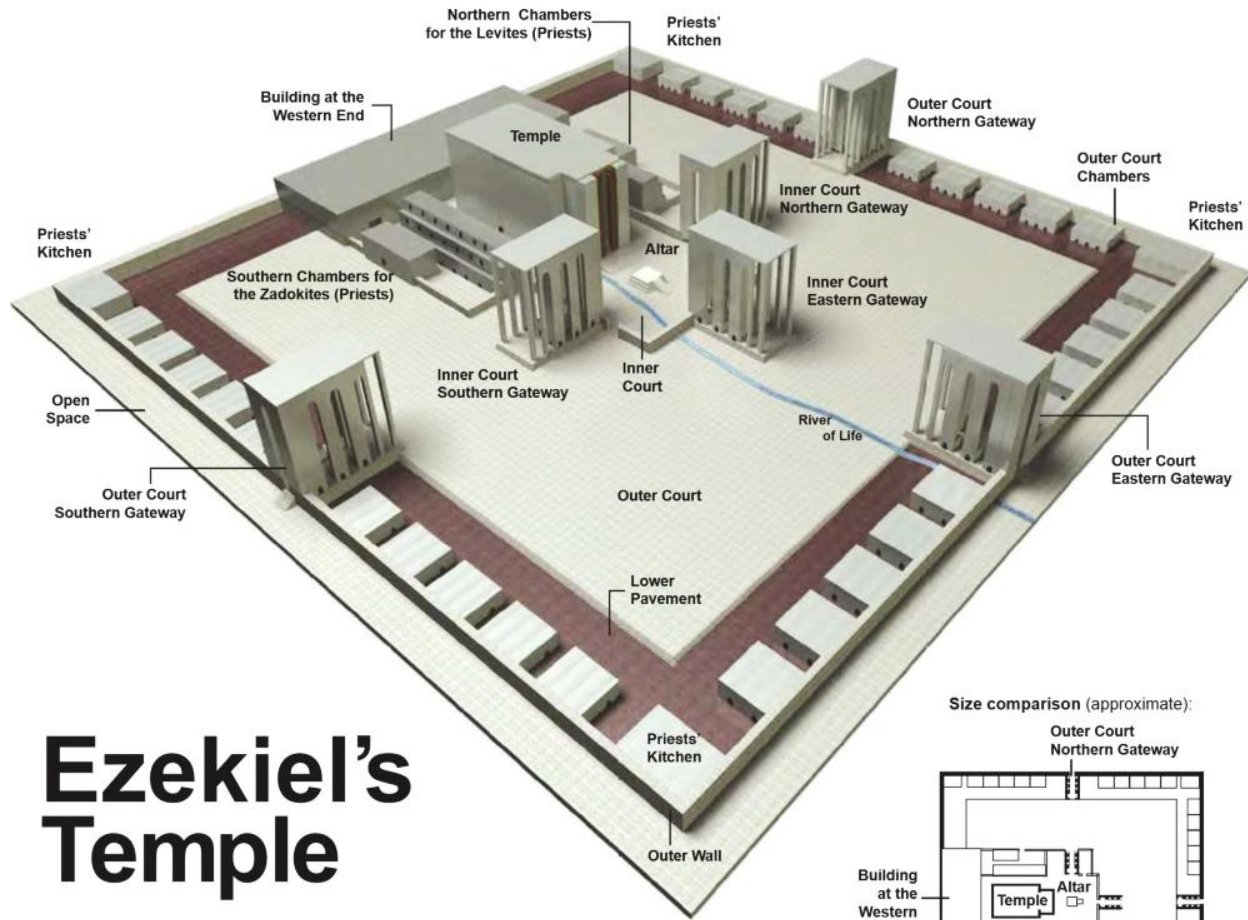
³ In his days a cistern for water was quarried out, a reservoir like the sea in circumference. ⁴ He considered how to save his people from ruin, and fortified the city to withstand a siege.

⁵ How glorious he was when the people gathered round him as he came out of the inner sanctuary! ⁶ *Like the morning star among the clouds, like the moon when it is full; ⁷ like the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High, and like the rainbow gleaming in glorious clouds; ⁸ like roses in the days of the first fruits, like lilies by a spring of water, like a green shoot on Lebanon on a summer day; ⁹ like fire and incense in the censer, like a vessel of hammered gold adorned with all kinds of precious stones; ¹⁰ like an olive tree putting forth its fruit, and like a cypress towering in the clouds.*

¹¹ *When he put on his glorious robe and clothed himself with superb perfection and went up to the holy altar, he made the court of the sanctuary glorious.* ¹² And when he received the portions from the hands of the priests, as he stood by the hearth of the altar with a garland of brethren around him, he was like a young cedar on Lebanon; and they surrounded him like the trunks of palm trees, ¹³ *all the sons of Aaron in their splendor with the Lord's offering in their hands, before the whole congregation of Israel.*

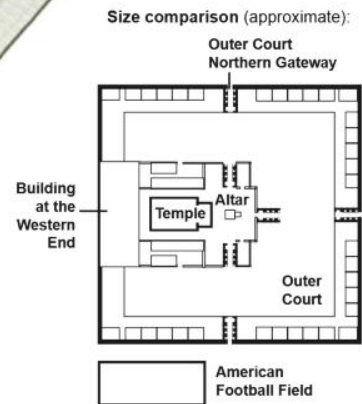
¹⁴ Finishing the service at the altars, and arranging the offering to the Most High, the Almighty, ¹⁵ *he reached out his hand to the cup and poured a libation of the blood of the grape; he poured it out at the foot of the altar, a pleasing odor to the Most High, the King of all.* ¹⁶ Then the sons of Aaron shouted, they sounded the trumpets of hammered work, and they made a great noise to be heard for remembrance before the Most High. ¹⁷ *Then all the people together made haste and fell to the ground upon their faces to worship their Lord, the Almighty, God Most High.* ¹⁸ And the singers praised him with their voices in sweet and full-toned melody. ¹⁹ And the people besought the Lord Most High in prayer before him who is merciful, till the order of worship of the Lord was ended; so they completed his service. ²⁰ Then Simon came down, and lifted up his hands over the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, *to pronounce the blessing of the Lord with his lips, and to glory in his name;* ²¹ and they bowed down in worship a second time, to receive the blessing from the Most High.

SIRACH 50:1-22



Ezekiel's Temple

The prophet Ezekiel was shown a vision of the Third Temple in 572 BC, just years after the First Temple was destroyed and before the Second Temple was built. Though the destruction of the Second Temple occurred in AD 70, a third temple has not yet been constructed.



After the destruction of Solomon's temple the prophet Ezekiel had a vision of a restored temple and its ordinances (*Ezek.* 40–44) as part of a series of visions concerning the restored community in the land of Israel (chs. 33–48). Some have held that Ezekiel was providing architectural guidance for the post-exilic building of the second Temple, *but the information the prophet gave was not sufficient for such a purpose*. Instead, these chapters should be understood as a statement of *hope for the exiles* that looks ahead symbolically to *God's dwelling in the midst of a people restored to holiness* and reestablished in their own land. This hope balanced the recent events of the fall of Jerusalem, while his vision of the return of God's glory to the temple (*Ezek.* 43) counterbalanced his earlier vision of its departure (*Ezek.* 10–11). The inspiration for the layout of Ezekiel's temple was Solomon's temple—though there are a number of differences.¹²¹⁴

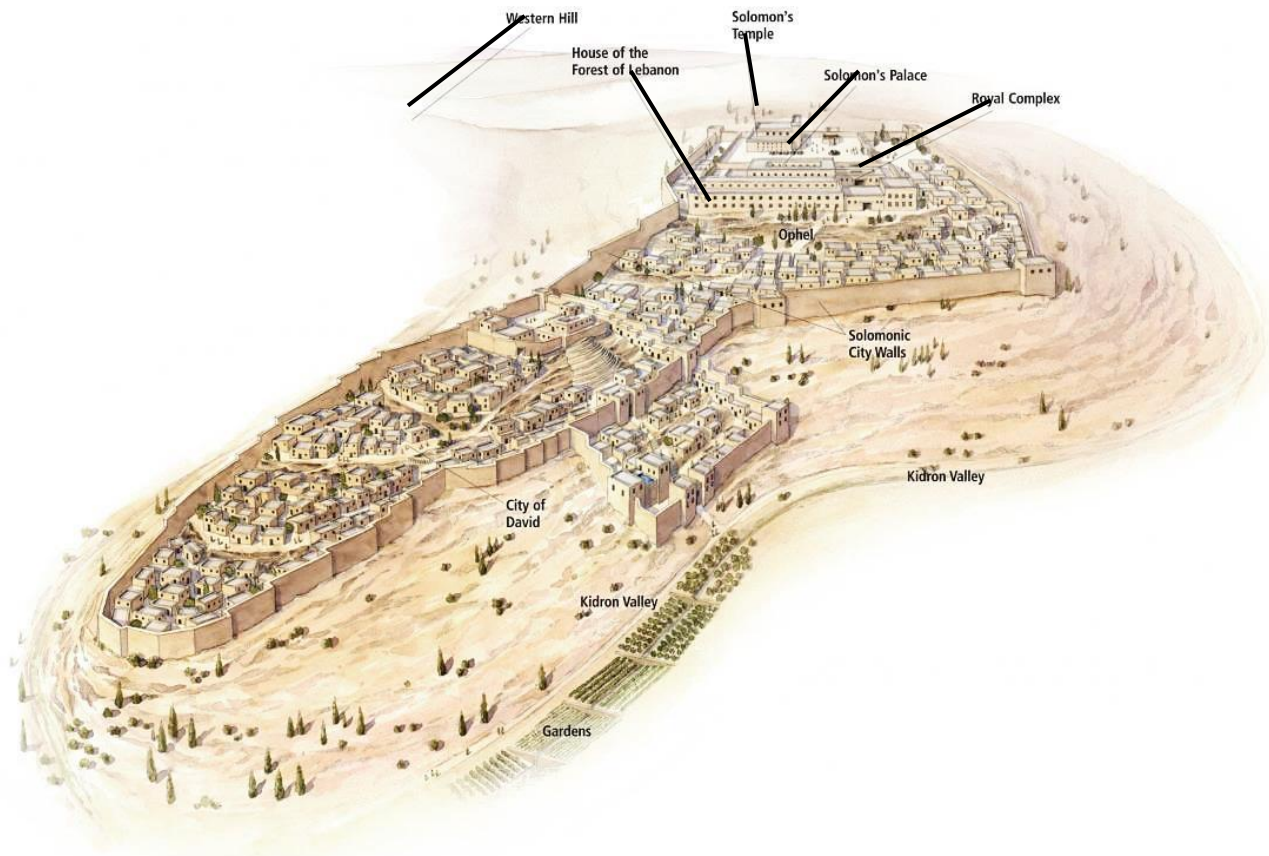
¹²¹⁴ *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 990.

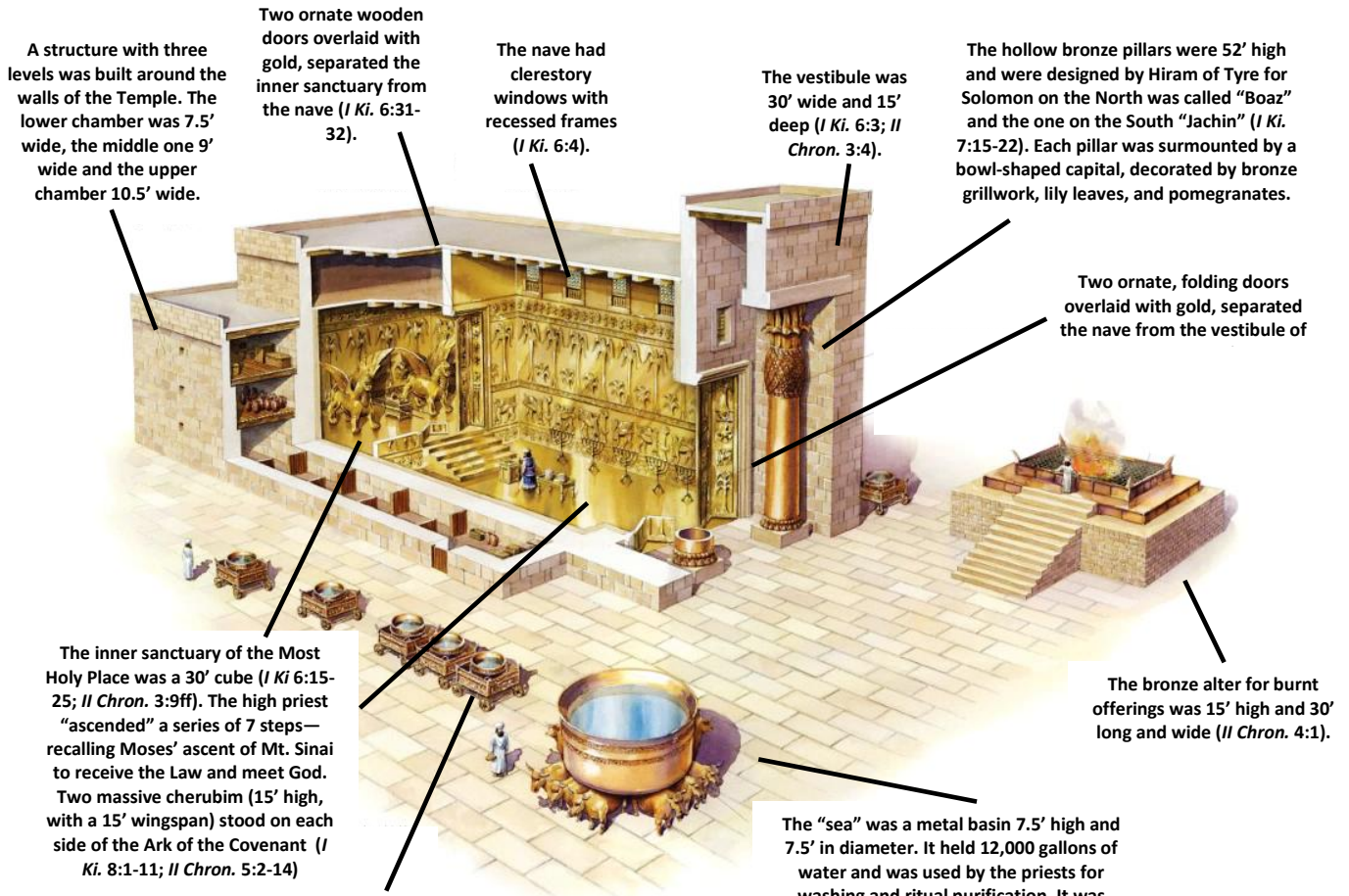
JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF SOLOMON

JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF SOLOMON (C. 970-930 B.C.)

David commanded his son Solomon to build a temple to the Lord, on Mt. Zion. The work took 7 years, followed by 13 years of building a royal complex to the south of the Temple (1 Ki. 6:38; 7:1). As this quarter was located outside the original 'City of David', new city walls were likely built to connect the two areas.

Solomon's Temple was Israel's first permanent sanctuary. The Temple was constructed on top of Mt. Moriah (*II Chron.* 3:1). The Royal Complex was built to the immediate south of the Temple. It consisted of Solomon's own palace and a small house for his Egyptian wife (1 Ki 7:8), an armory called 'The House of the Forest of Lebanon' (1 Ki 7:2-5), a Hall of Pillars (*I Ki* 7:6), and a Hall of the Throne (*I Ki* 7:7). A special "ascent" connected the Royal Complex with the Temple. The area between the Temple complex and the City of David was called the *Ophel*.

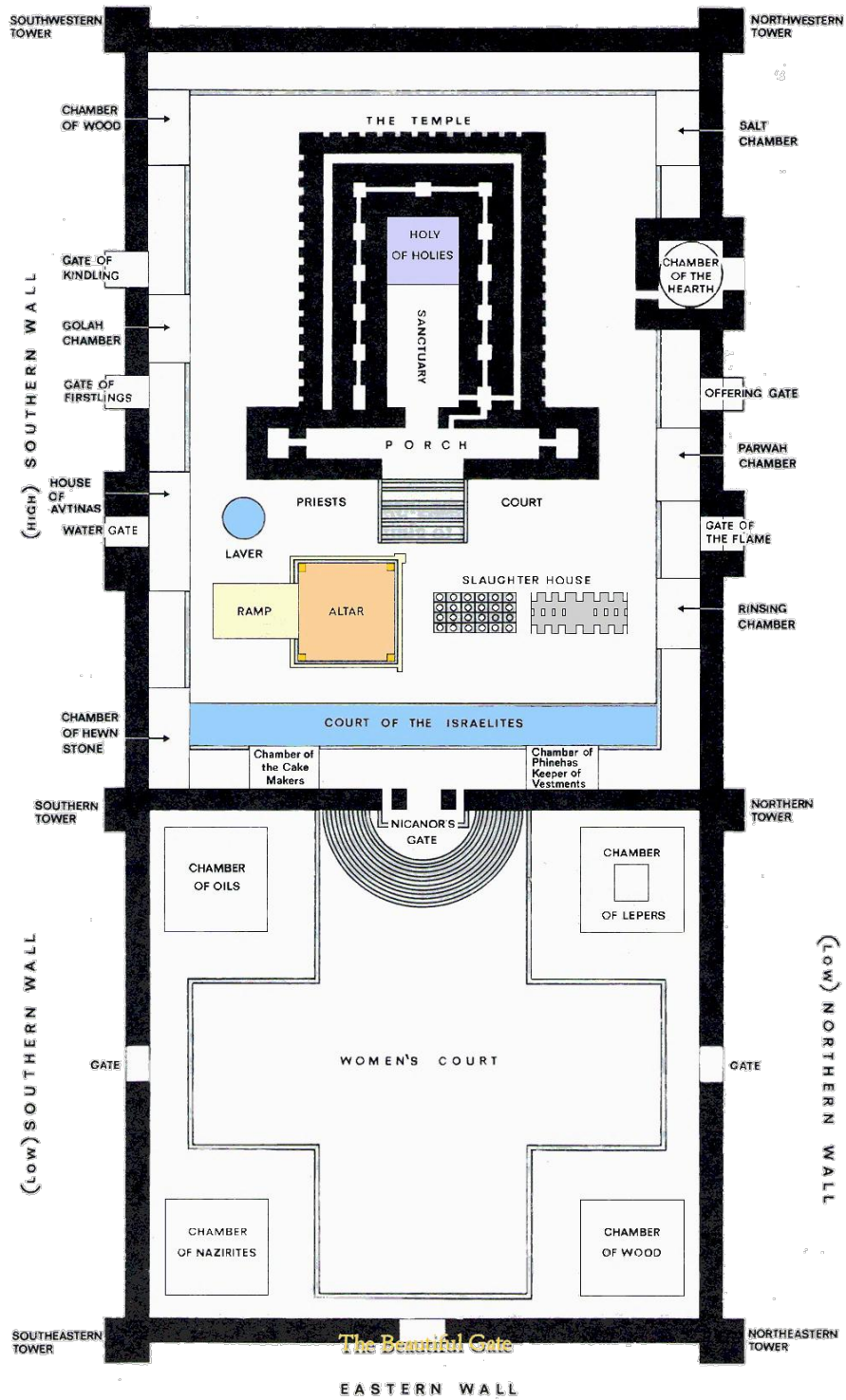


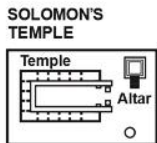
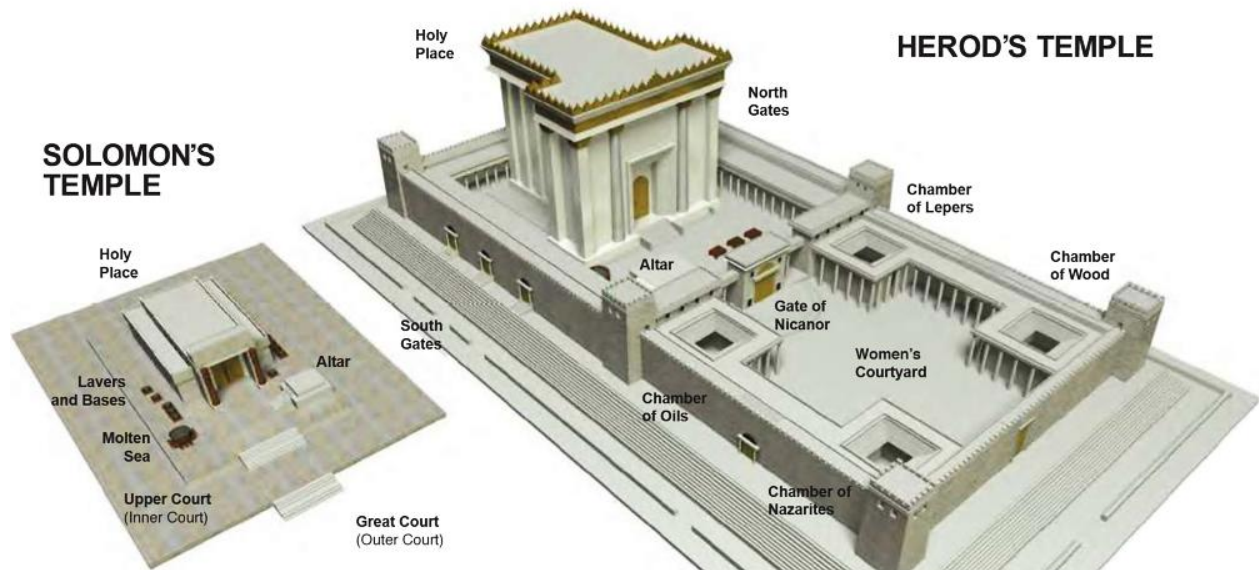


Solomon may have built both a large stone altar and a smaller bronze altar

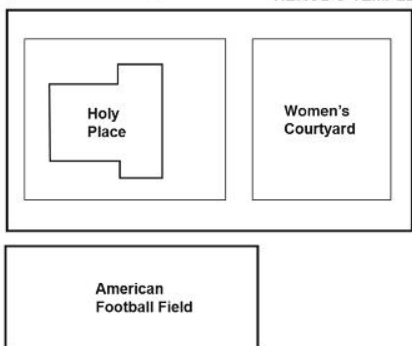
Solomon may have built both a large stone altar and a smaller bronze altar. King Ahaz moved Solomon's bronze altar—a considerable feat given its weight and dimensions (*II Ki. 16:14*). King Asa repaired the altar (*II Chron. 15:9*).

BLUEPRINT OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE





Size comparison (approximate):

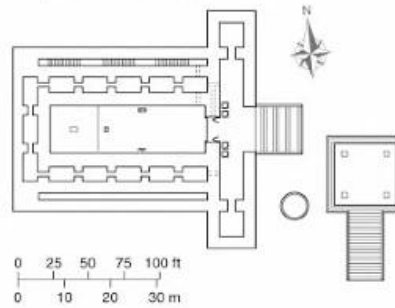


Temple Comparison

Solomon's Temple, finished in 957 BC, was less than one-half the size of Herod the Great's expanded Second Temple in Jerusalem, built in 20–19 BC.

THE HOLY PLACE AND MOST HOLY PLACE

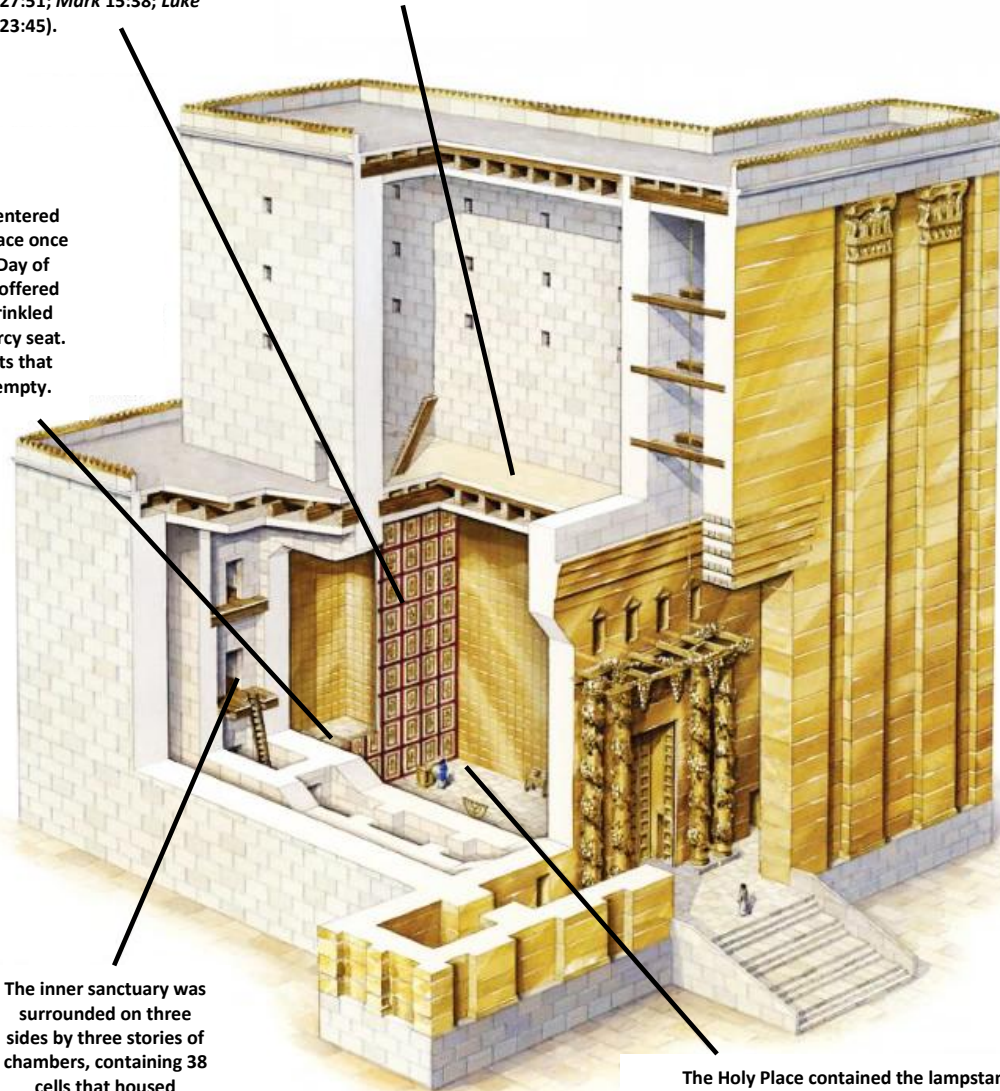
Temple Architectural Plan



A massive curtain separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. When Jesus dies, this curtain was torn in two from top to bottom (*Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45*).

There was an upper chamber above the sanctuary which allowed access (through holes in the floor) for cleaning the gold colored walls below. A ladder gave access to the roof level.

The high priest entered the Most Holy Place once a year, on the Day of Atonement. He offered incense and sprinkled blood on the mercy seat. Josephus reports that the room was empty.



The inner sanctuary was surrounded on three sides by three stories of chambers, containing 38 cells that housed supplies and vessels for liturgies.

The Holy Place contained the lampstand (menorah), the Bread of the Presence, and the Altar of Incense. It was here that the angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah—on the right side of the altar (*Luke 1:11*)

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF HEROD'S TEMPLE

The Sanhedrin came out to teach people from the Scriptures on this terrace on the Feasts of Passover and Tabernacles. It is likely here that the 12-year old Jesus was found by Mary and Joseph, "sitting among the teachers listening to them and asking them questions" (*Luke 2:46*).

The altar of burnt offerings stood in the Temple court. To the west of it stood the brass laver for priest washing—and to its north the place of animal preparation.

The Chamber of the Hearth housed the priests who served when their division was on duty (e.g. Zechariah in *Luke 1:8*)

The Nicanor Gate divided the western Court of the Israelites (where Jewish men could observe Temple liturgies) from the Court of Women. Women were allowed to stand in the southern side of the Nicanor Gate and watch as their sacrifices for purification were made (see *Luke*

The Chamber of Lepers where purification rites for were carried out (*Matt 8:4; Mark 1:44*).

The Court of Hewn Stone housed the Sanhedrin until @30 A.D. (see below).

A ladder in the Court of Women for lighting the Golden Torches on the Feast of Tabernacles at night.

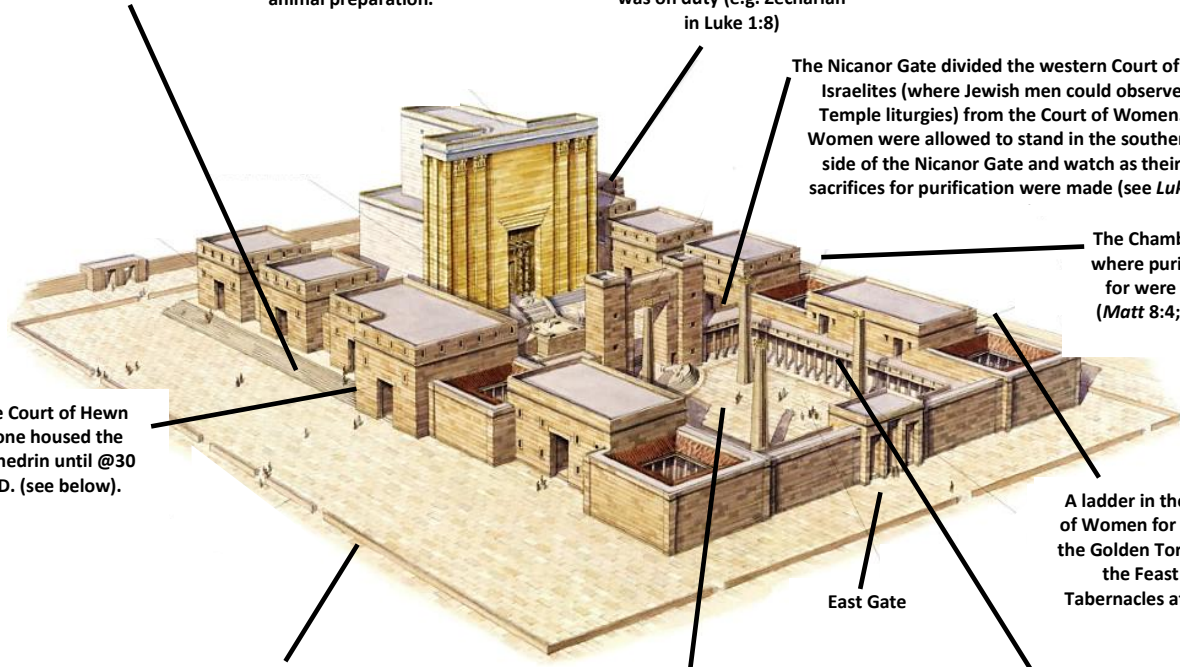
East Gate

A soreg (i.e. low, latticed railing) separated the Temple Courts from the Court of the Gentiles. This prohibited Gentiles—or non-purified Jews from entry (on the pain of death). Even Herod himself was not able to enter beyond it. It may be the soreg that Paul referred to in *Eph. 2:9*, when he spoke of the "diving wall" between Jews and Gentiles which was abolished by Christ.

The Court of Women was a 293' square courtyard capable of holding 6,000 faithful. Its name requires clarification: it was not a court for "women only"—but rather indicated the place beyond which women could not enter. It was likely here that Simeon held the infant Jesus (*Luke 2:25-38*)

These colonnades contained 13 "trumpet-shaped" boxes, into which people placed monetary offerings (*Luke 21:1-4*)

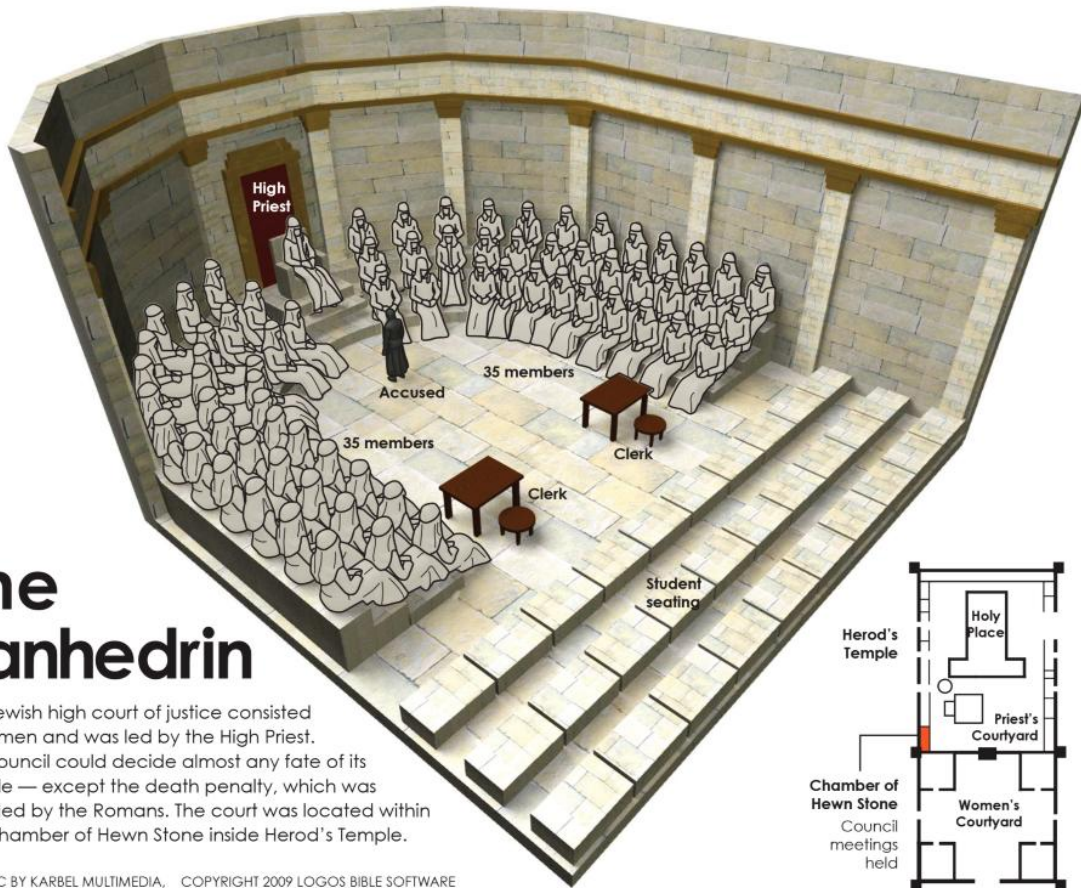
The Chamber of the Nazirites – where a Nazarite would bring his sacrifices after his solemn vow.



The Sanhedrin

The Jewish high court of justice consisted of 71 men and was led by the High Priest. The council could decide almost any fate of its people — except the death penalty, which was decided by the Romans. The court was located within the Chamber of Hewn Stone inside Herod's Temple.

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SANHEDRIN (Gk. *synédrión* “seated together”). Council in Jerusalem that functioned as the central judicial authority for Jews. Mentioned in the NT as the body that sought Jesus’ arrest (*Matt.* 26:47; “elders” *John* 11:47–53) and before which Jesus (*Matt.* 26:57–27:2) and some leaders of the early Church (*Acts* 4:5–21; 5:21–40) were tried. Rabbinic tradition links the origin of the Sanhedrin with the 70 elders who assisted Moses in the wilderness (*Num.* 11:16–17, 24–25).

The Sanhedrin had 70 members (71 when the president was counted among the members). The high priest was the Sanhedrin’s president in the NT period (*Matt.* 26:57). The council’s members were drawn mainly from the leading priestly families and the religious instructors known as “*scribes*” or “*teachers of the law*.” The Sanhedrin was composed of both priestly Sadducees and scribal Pharisees.

Generally, the Sanhedrin served as the central authority for: (a) civic administration of Jerusalem; (b) religious instruction; (c) establishment of policy for Temple services; (d) and justice in cases neither handled locally nor reserved to Roman authorities, particularly those involving the Temple and violations of Torah. The authority of the Sanhedrin over Jewish communities outside Judea was exercised through the local synagogues.

In addition to the central Sanhedrin, the NT also refers to local Jewish councils, which could exist in any town with 120 or more men (*Matt.* 5:22; 10:17). Such councils administered justice for the synagogues in their area and had powers of excommunication (*John* 16:2) and corporal punishment (*Matt.* 10:17; *Acts* 22:19; *II Cor.* 11:24). Joseph of Arimathea was apparently a member of such a local council (*Mark* 15:43).¹²¹⁵

¹²¹⁵ Source: *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 912.

All male Israelites were commanded to appear before the Lord three times each year: for **Passover**, for the **Feast of Weeks** (Pentecost), and the **Feast of Tabernacles** (*Exod.* 23:14–17 34:23–24; *Deut.* 16:1–17). Although the commandment applied only to men, women and children also went (*I Sam.* 1:3–5; *Luke* 2:41–42).

Jeroboam I, the first king of the separate Northern kingdom of Israel, wished to end the pilgrimages of his people to Jerusalem—and set up alternative shrines at Dan and Bethel. He was sharply criticized by the prophet Amos (*Amos* 4:4–5; 5:5–6; 8:14).¹²¹⁶

“So the king took counsel, and *made two calves of gold*. And he said to the people, “You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. *Behold your gods, O Israel*, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.”²⁹ And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan” (*I Ki* 12:28–30).

A long practiced custom by the time of Jesus was for pilgrims to chant the “**Songs of Ascents**” (*Psa.* 120–134) on their way to Jerusalem:

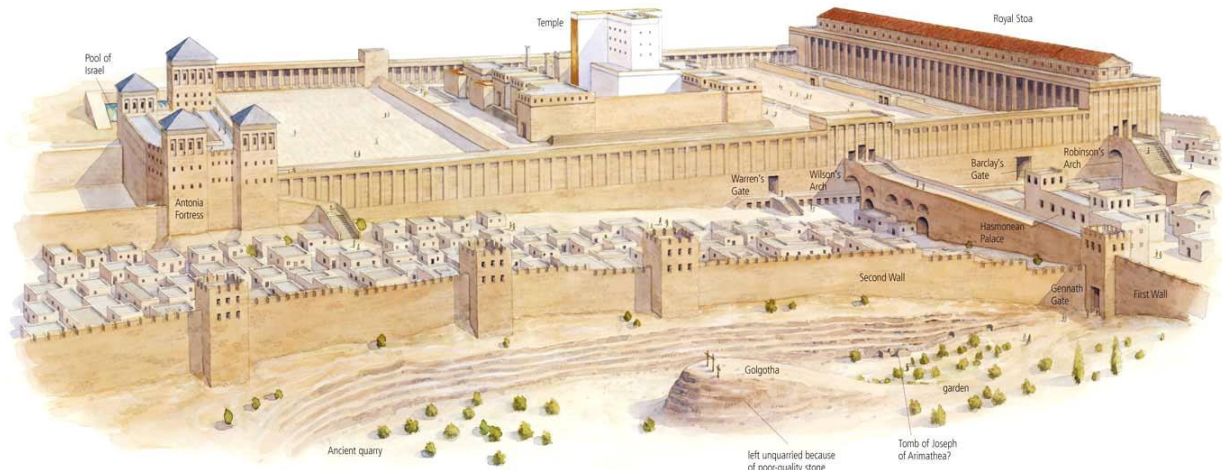
PSA. 122 “I was glad when they said to me, ‘*Let us go to the house of the LORD!*’ Our feet have been standing within your gates, *O Jerusalem! Jerusalem*, built as a city which is bound firmly together, to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD. There thrones for judgment were set, the thrones of the house of David. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! ‘May they prosper who love you! Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers!’* For my brethren and companions’ sake I will say, ‘*Peace be within you!*’ For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your good.”

¹²¹⁶ Source: *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 834.

HEROD'S TEMPLE IN THE TIME OF JESUS



GOLGOTHA—OUTSIDE OF JERUSALEM



GOLGOTHA. The name, defined by the Evangelists as “*the place of a skull*” (*Matt. 27:33; Mark 15:22; John 19:17*; see: *Luke 23:33*), is the Greek transliteration of the Aramaic *gûlgaltā*, “*skull*” (Vulgate: *Calvaria*, i.e. “*Calvary*”). According to Origen, Golgotha was named after *the skull of Adam*, who was buried there, according to ancient traditions.

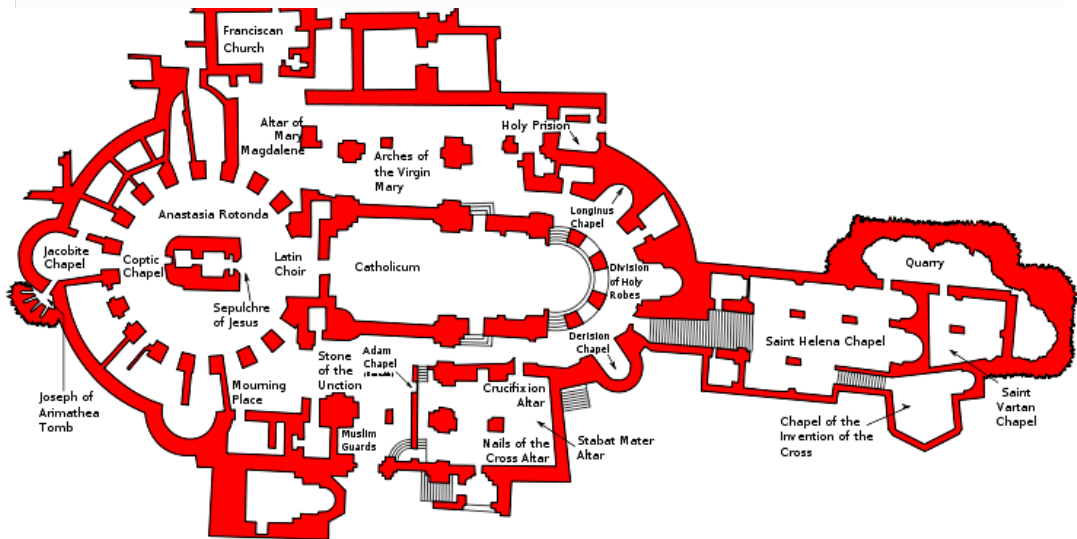
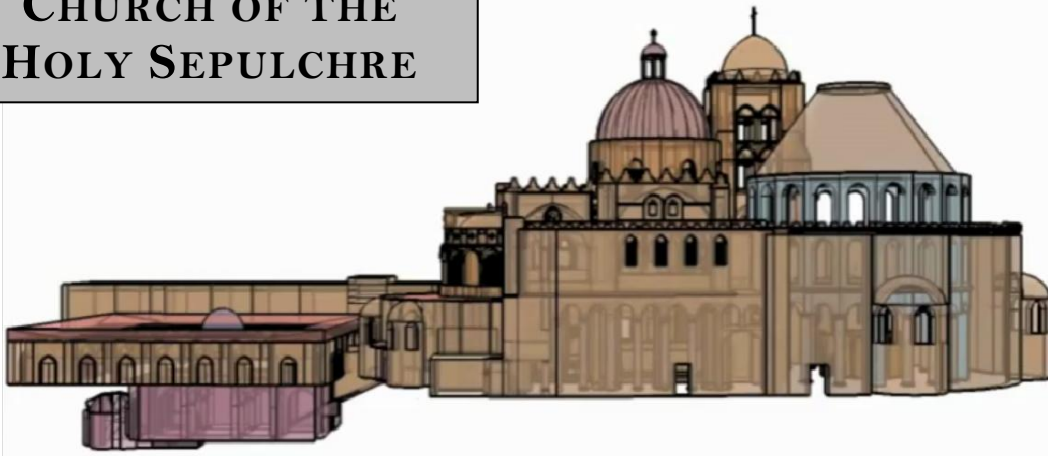
The NT reports that Jesus’ crucifixion took place outside the city (*Heb. 13:12*), in keeping with both Roman custom and Jewish law. Golgotha was near Jerusalem (*John 19:20*), and since it is said that there were many passersby (*Matt. 27:39; Mark 15:29*), it was likely beside a road.

In 336 Constantine built the *Church of the Holy Sepulcher* on the traditional site of Golgotha. Today, the 12th century church which stands over that earlier one is now in the western part of the ‘Old City’. Inside is a mound of dense rock about 15’ high. About 130’ away is the site identified as the tomb of Jesus. The church was destroyed by the Arabs and later rebuilt by the Crusaders in 1130; after extensive fire damage 1808, it was restored—but very imperfectly. The church has long been a focal point of political agitation among Arabs, Jews, and Christians, and it is now “operated” by Muslims.

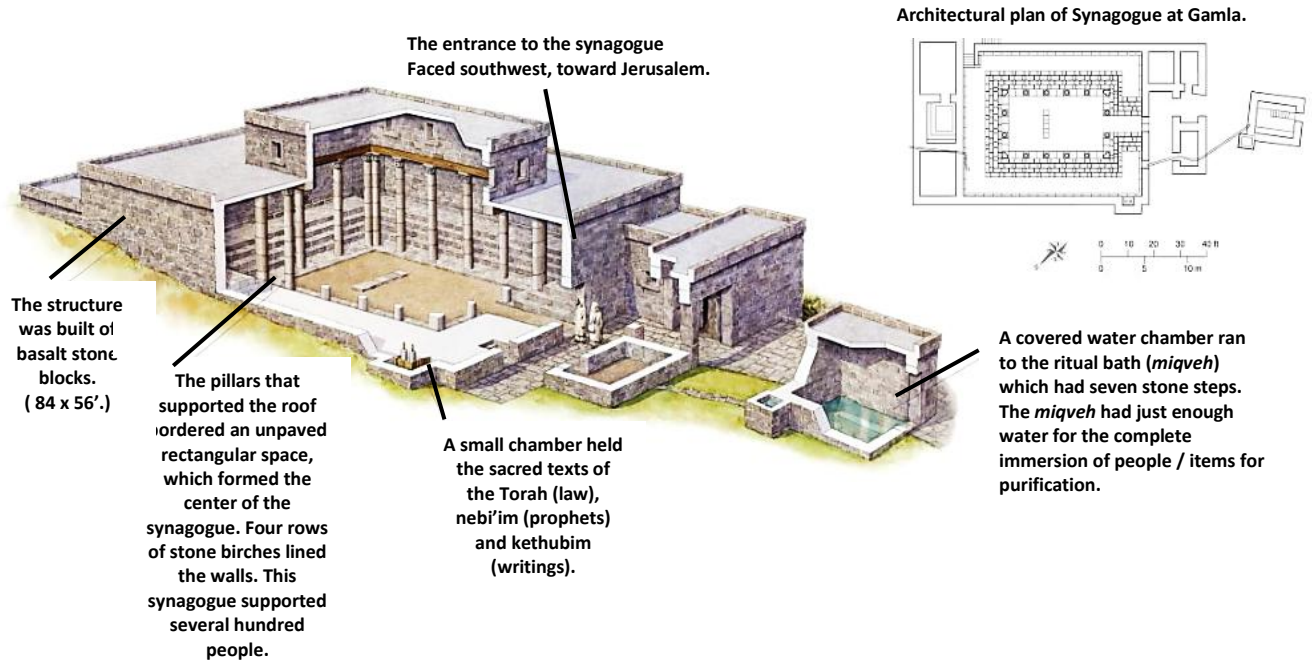
Under the Armenian quarter, the remains of a pagan altar were discovered in 1974; they date from the early 130’s A.D. It was at this time that the Roman Emperor Hadrian, who rebuilt Jerusalem into the thoroughly pagan city of *Aelia Capitolina* and declared it off limits to Jews, desecrated the early Christian shrine with the site of Golgotha / the tomb of Jesus. In its place, Hadrian erected a Temple of Jupiter.¹²¹⁷

¹²¹⁷ Source: *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 430–431.

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE



THE SYNAGOGUE AT GAMLA



In cities other than Jerusalem, the synagogue was the center of Jewish worship during the time of Christ. Synagogues were located in most of the leading towns of Israel. Although very little remains of the original first-century synagogue at Nazareth, extensive archaeological evidence exists for a typical Jewish synagogue in the town of Gamla (Golan Heights), which would have had much in common with the synagogues Jesus visited in Nazareth and other cities.

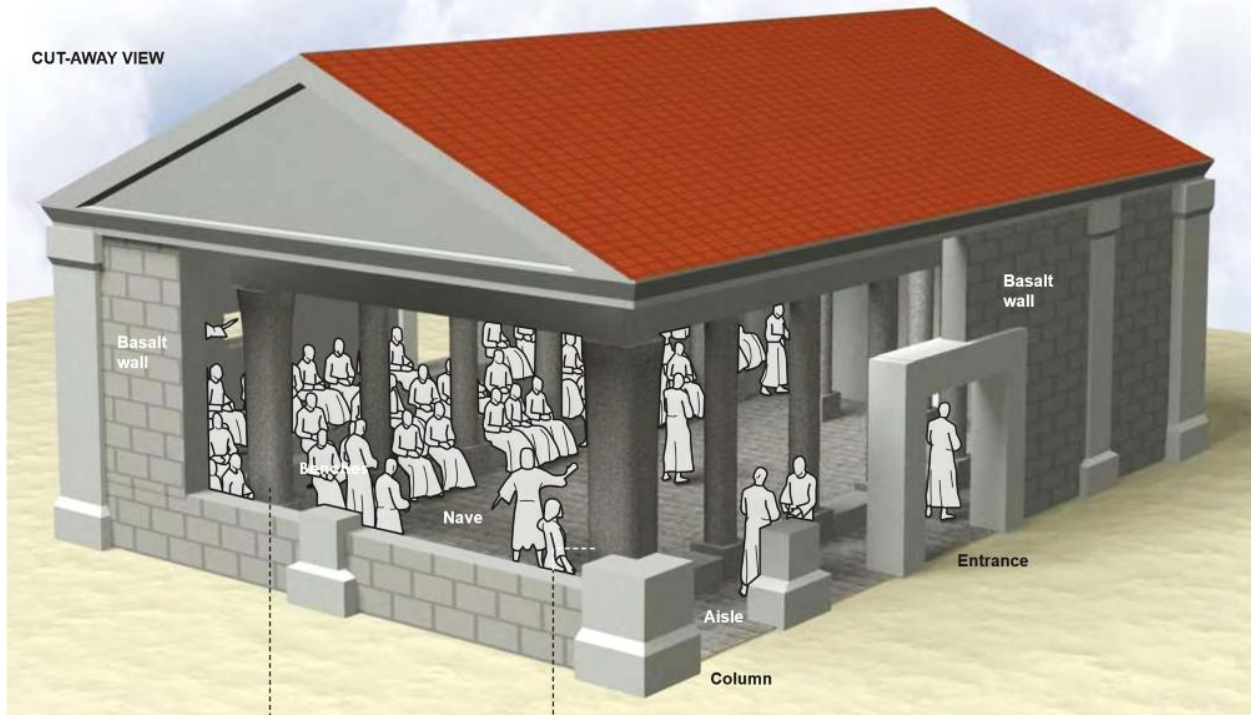
This illustration is based on the excavation of the Gamla synagogue, one of the oldest in Israel. The city of Gamla was 6 miles (9.7 km) northeast of the Sea of Galilee. It was destroyed by the Romans in 67 A.D., early in the Jewish Revolt.¹²¹⁸



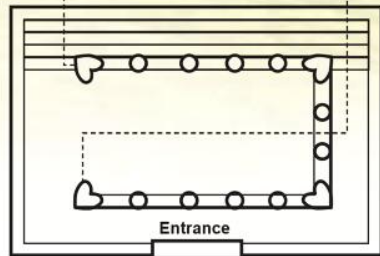
¹²¹⁸ *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008).

Christ taught and healed many people in this synagogue. It was here the man with the unclean spirit proclaimed Jesus the Holy One of God (Mark 1:21–28; Luke 4:31–35). Jesus also delivered the discourse on the Bread of Life here (John 6:59).

CUT-AWAY VIEW



TOP VIEW



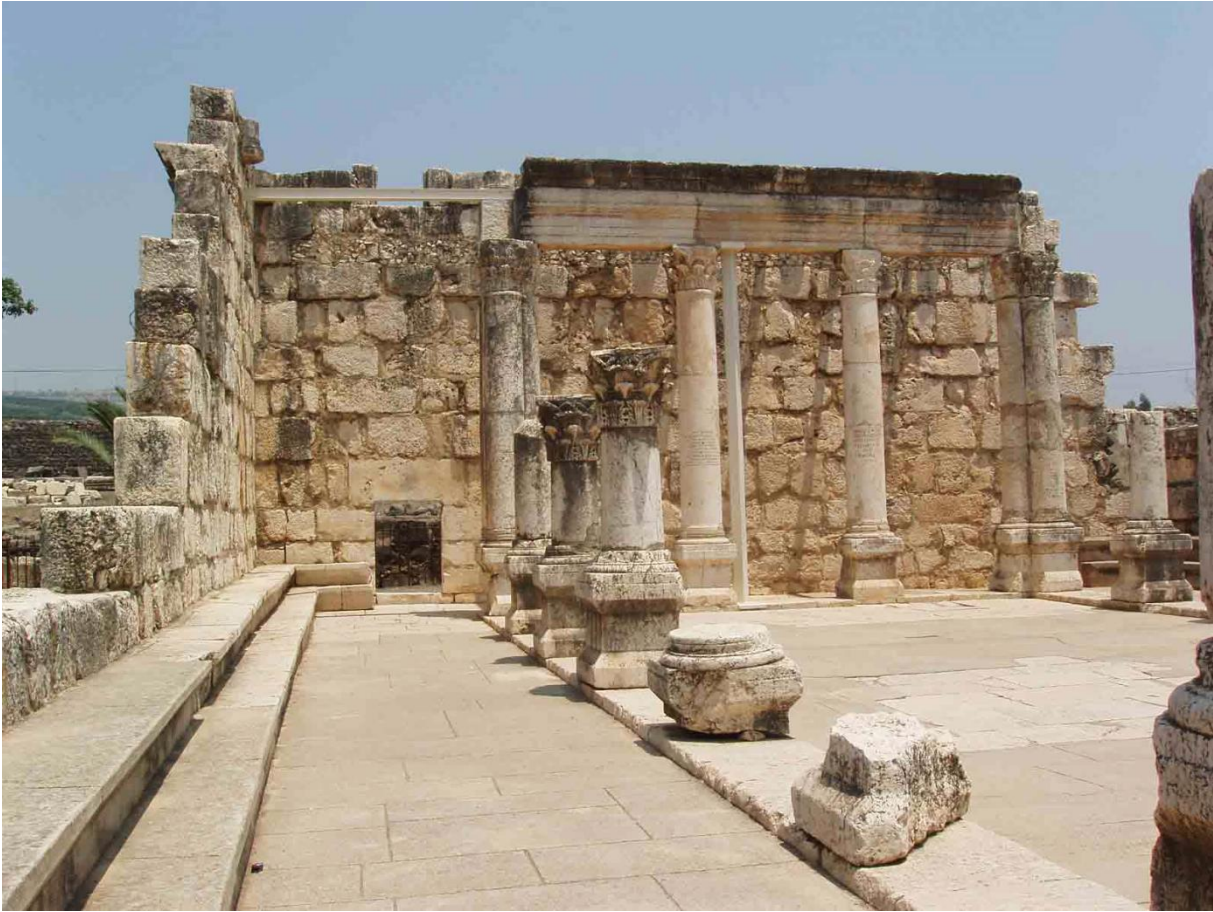
Heart-shaped columns were constructed at each of the four corners.

The Synagogue at Capernaum

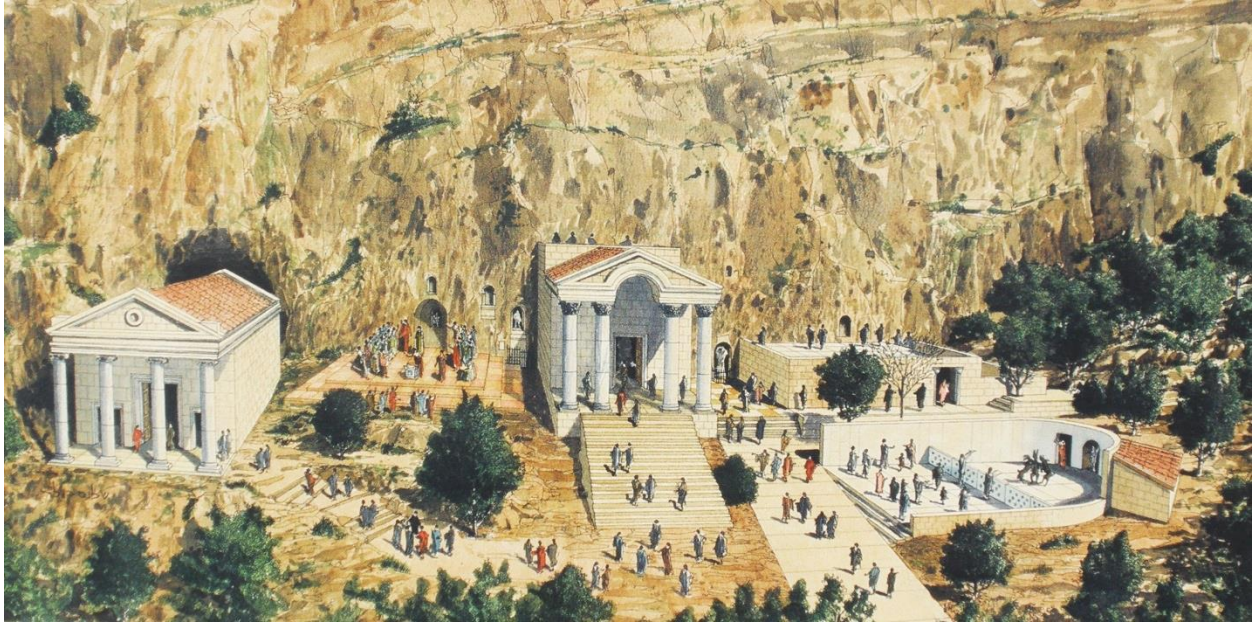
Luke's Gospel says the synagogue in Capernaum was built by the centurion of whom Jesus later said, "I have not found such faith in Israel" (Luke 7:5, 9). It was destroyed and rebuilt in the fourth century.

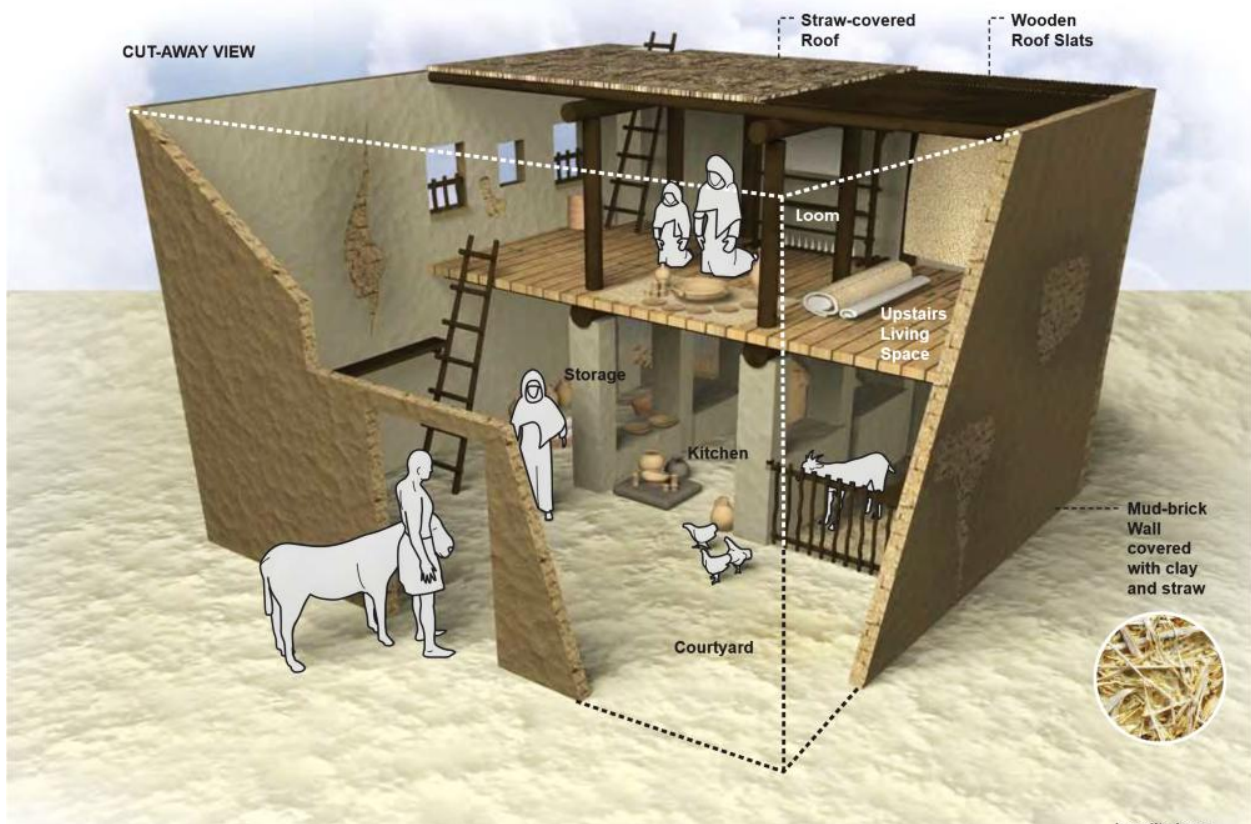
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THE SYNAGOGUE AT CAPERNAUM (2014)



ROMAN TEMPLE OF PAN AT ANCIENT CAESAREA PHILIPPI

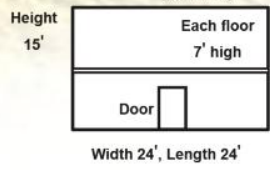




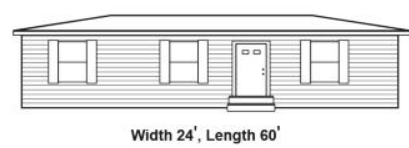
First-Century Israelite House

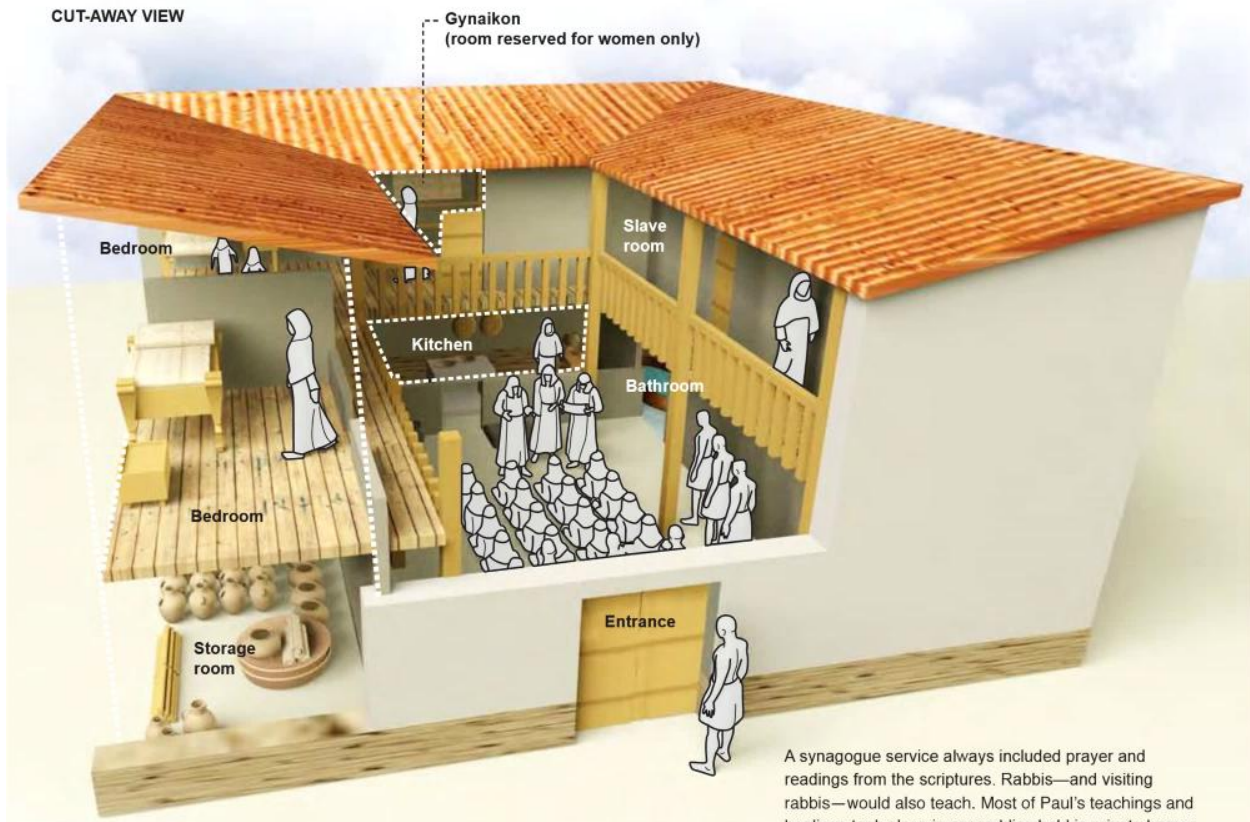
The homes of poor families were small and plain. They were built of rough stone (or mud-brick) walls and roofs of woven branches covered with clay. Living spaces were used for household work—cooking and weaving. At night, the family's domestic animals were housed in the lower level.

Size comparison:
First-century houses were smaller than modern double-wide trailers and accommodated an entire family.



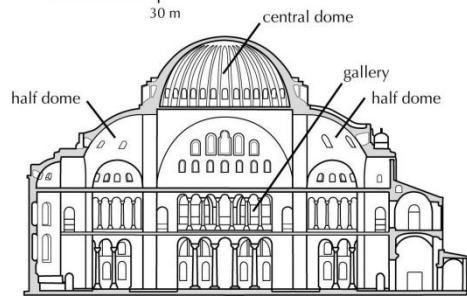
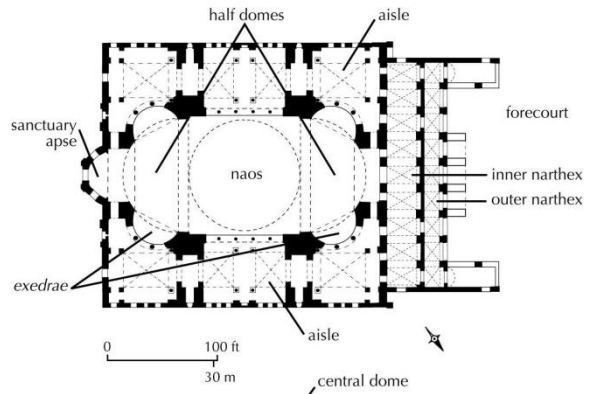
Double wide mobile home (front view)





Ancient Home Synagogue

The term "synagogue" refers generally to a Jewish assembly for prayer. During the first-century AD, the term referred primarily to buildings designed to house such assemblies. Jews living in Greek towns usually assembled for prayer in private homes—and if an assembly member was wealthy, the synagogue might have been held in a home like this one.



HAGIA SOPHIA

