

What is the Temple – The Biblical Theme

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MAIN VERSES

Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love. A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God. Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family. So welcome home.

What is the temple? What is the temple in the Bible? That's what we're going to be discussing today. Shabbat shalom, everyone. So excited to be here today.

If this is your first time visiting our church or watching services online, guys, we're a community of diverse families with diverse backgrounds and individuals who, as we love the Sabbath, we find joy in the entirety of the Bible. But most of all, we're a community that seeks first and foremost to orbit the person of Jesus who we call Yeshua. So welcome to Founded in Truth Fellowship.

The Story of God's Dwelling

I am so excited about this message because, just like the past two messages about the Sabbath and the gospel, I have been given the privilege to talk about the story of the Bible—not just the topics within the Bible, but the overarching story that so many people were involved in contributing to, most of them not realizing they were even contributing to it. And to the people who throughout the generations preserved these documents, carrying them through exile, hell. And to the editors on the other side of exile who formed the stories together in a way that told the story of their people, but most of all, the story of their God. And in the first century, the authors who pinned down the culmination of the entirety of the story that leads to a person named Yeshua.

I am forever in awe every time I open up this library of books because it is a story, right? That leads to Yeshua. And it is beautiful and it is complex and it is messy. And the reason why I'm so

passionate about looking at the Bible like that is because I feel that we've done maybe a disservice in how we've presented the Bible to our children, specifically in this country, in evangelical circles, because we tend to teach our children—at least, that's how it was for me growing up—that the Bible is holy and it's good, which is correct, absolutely, inspired by the Holy Spirit. It's an amazing thing. It is holy to be reverent. You're supposed to study it. But we teach our kids to memorize Bible verses. And growing up, I was always taught to memorize Bible verses, but never taught to read the story. I was never taught the story. And now looking back, wow, I have an opportunity to teach my son the story of the Bible and not simply these little Bible verses that usually are memorized and used out of context and so on and so forth.

So without further ado, with my passion for what this is and this beautiful blessing God has given to us, let's dive into the Bible and talk about the temple as a narrative element or a literary element that shows up in the Bible—where it shows up and whether it's telling a bigger story.

Understanding the Temple

So the temple is mentioned in the Bible, and of course it became the centerpiece of focus for the Judean people of Israel's religion in the story of the Old Testament. It was a symbolic place that represented God dwelling among his people. It was, in some aspects, seen as a type of stargate. If you read the function of it, especially in the ancient Near Eastern context, it was seen like a stargate. If you know the movie, anyone? Anyone? Couple, thank you. It was seen like a stargate that connected the throne room of God to earth. It was a portal way, if you will. That's kind of how it was viewed. And so by the time we get to the first century, when Yeshua—Jesus—was born and walked out his ministry, the temple was quite a big deal, right? It had a long history of evolution and being destroyed and rebuilt and renovated. The temple was being expanded by the Hasmoneans and so on and so forth. But during the time of Yeshua, there was another extreme renovation done by King Herod. He wanted to make this thing beautiful. He wanted to make it as beautiful as he felt it deserved, being the house of God. And so, why wouldn't you want to do that, right? Why wouldn't you pour in your treasure and your heart into the place where you feel like God is dwelling? And so it was seen as the place where God's glory and God's spirit dwelled and rested.

And so I have two quotes here that are relevant to the time of Yeshua. One of them is by Josephus, a contemporary of Yeshua, a historian. And the other one is from the Mishnah, a text written about 200 or 300 years later. Here is the perspective from a Jewish person in the first century of what the temple was. We have the first from Josephus, describing the temple: "The outward walls in those days were covered with so much gold that they were blinding with fiery

splendor at sunset. Sunrise. No one has seen a truly beautiful building unless he's seen the temple." Can you imagine describing a building this way? How appropriate that it would be the house of God. This was the attitude and the atmosphere revolving around the temple in Jerusalem in the New Testament.

So imagine the shock and the head-turning response when Paul said this about fellow believers, fellow followers of Yeshua in [1 Corinthians 3:16](#). He says this: How could God's people be identified with such an incredible piece of architecture?

Before the Temple: The Tabernacle

Well, in order to answer that question, we'll need to dive into the story of the Bible. Now, as I said, the temple has a lengthy history in the Bible and in history. But before the temple in Jerusalem was permanently built to house the glory of God, we have another structure known as the tabernacle, right? And the tabernacle was made up of three main sections. I'm sure you guys know this. You had the outer courts, which is where the brazen altar was, the laver. And this is where the priest would come and you would bring your offering to this area. But then you would step inside of the structure, and you would have a place known as the holy place, where you would have the showbread, the altar of incense—the second of the three altars or sacred places. You would have the candelabra, the menorah. And then beyond the veil, there would be a place known as the most sacred place, the holiest of holies, which of course housed the Ark of the Covenant, this type of throne of God's glory.

Before God's glory was permanently based in a temple in Jerusalem, it was nomadic. It was in a tent. And I found that amazing. And before God's glory was housed in a tent, where do we see God dwelling? We discussed it last week. We see it in the garden. We see it in the garden in Eden—on earth as it is in heaven.

Genesis: The Foundation

And so, when we're going to dive into the story to see what type of elements are going to be important, where do you think we should start? [Genesis 1](#). We know the chapter. It's a short story of God doing whatever it takes to dwell with humanity. It's the point of the short prose poetic narrative. God brings together everything so that he can make mankind, male and female, in his images. His images are the reflection of his character throughout the world. And after six days, on the seventh day, he rests with them. He puts them in the garden. He plants them in the garden. And this is how the story starts. It starts just like any other story would. It starts by

telling us a little bit about the main character. It tells us about the character and the goals and the mission and the trajectory and the motivations of the main character, which in the Bible is not you, by the way. It's God.

So God spends six days making a habitat for people. And it wasn't for him, it was for people. And then on the seventh day, he rests. And then we turn to [Genesis 2](#), or after verse 3, and we get a slightly different account, chronologically, but that's okay. It comes from a perspective of the land. So instead of this macro view, we're now on the land kind of looking up. And what does the text tell us about what's going on on earth after creation, or during creation?

[Genesis 2](#), starting in verse 8, says this: "Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden, and there he put the man he had formed. The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground, trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river watering the garden flowed from where? It's important. Flowed from Eden. And from there, it was separated into four headwaters. The name of the first was Pishan. The name of the second was Gihon. The name of the third is Tigris. And the fourth was Euphrates."

So you have this land—it's translated "earth," ha-aretz, it's land. And then you have this place, Eden. And then you have this garden that's planted in Eden, Pishon, where man—God puts, or nuach, or rests man in, and also commands man to work the garden. And inside the garden, you have a tree of life, so much like the tabernacle, if you will, where you have an outer court, a most sacred area where the menorah is, right? Which depicts the tree of life. That's what the menorah is. It's a seven lampstand. It's meant to look like a trunk of a tree with seven branches coming off it. God commanded that you have leaves and bulbs and almond bulbs on it. It's meant to look like a tree. It's the tree of life in the holy place. And in the same area of the tabernacle, the priests work daily.

The Two Gardens: Eden and the Garden

So too do you have the outer land. You have this garden area. And then you have this sacred place where the living water runs from, Eden. I love that. Love that. So nerdy moment—Bible nerds, perk up; everyone else, just pause for a moment. We always envision—and maybe we have the scripture still up there—we always envision like you have the land, and then you have Eden, and Eden's like a country or like a state or like a county, right? And then within Eden, like in the middle of it, you have the garden, right? And so we have this perspective like, okay, the garden is the most sacred of all spaces, Eden is a little bit less, and so on and so forth. But the

text actually says that the garden was planted off to the east of Eden. Okay, well, if we are having a type of overlay of three spheres of holiness, which one's more holy, Eden or the garden? And we always say the garden, but where does the water of life run out of? Into the garden, and then from the garden it goes out to all nations. So it's very interesting. As we go through some of these scriptures of the prophets that refer to Eden and the garden, it's interesting that there's a perspective there that some of us have never seen. So Bible nerds, it could be one way or the other depending on how you read the text, which I love. Okay, we're going to hit play, keep going. Everyone else good?

So yeah, you have the water of life only emerging from Eden. And then you get this image of a mountain in the text of Ezekiel that also has a spring. See, we tend to simply read these chapters of Genesis as the creation stories, right? But I would assert that they're also the story of a temple inauguration, where God's presence is coming to rest in a sacred place. And there is another Garden of Eden story in the Bible. Some actually date it as being older than [Genesis 2](#). Debatable, whatever. It's found in [Ezekiel 28](#). And it's a little bit different. In this garden story, there's no snake. And in this garden story, there's not even Zoe or Eve—she's not even in the picture. You simply have this Adamic character as a priest in God's temple garden. And Ezekiel wraps it up as a charge against the king of Tyre here.

Ezekiel's Garden and the Direction East

So we're going to read a little bit of it. I'm just going to hit the highlights here. It's in Ezekiel chapter 28, verse 13. In church growing up, I was taught it was about the devil, but that's a presupposition—nothing in the text really supports that. But here it is, verse 13: "You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone adorned you," like the high priest. That's pretty neat. That's kind of a cool garden story, right? I love that. Eden, the mountain of God, the garden of God—key language that we're going to see moving forward in the story. Ezekiel goes on to elaborate that it was the sins of this Adam-type figure that desecrated the sanctuaries and caused him to be cast out. Eden is a type of temple. It has sanctuaries. It is the holy mountain of God.

Where was the entrance to the garden, or Eden, if you will, whichever one you—it was on the east side, right? [Genesis 3:24](#)? Because that's where they were kicked out from. Where did the tabernacle face? Going east throughout the story of the Bible typically signifies walking away from God, right? When God's spirit—Ezekiel's vision—when God's spirit lifts up from the temple and departs from it because of the sins of Israel, it went east, away from his house. "I'm getting out of here." East. In [Genesis 11](#), the people traveled eastward to build the tower in

Babel, Babylon, which is east of Israel, which is the direction that Judah was forced to go when they rebelled against God. Adam and Eve rebelled, went east into the exile. Humanity traveled east toward Babylon. Israel rebelled and was forced to go east into exile into Babylon. It's a repeating echo of the same story. It's intentional. This is what the authors of the Bible did, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The Tree of Life and the River of Healing

The tree of life stood in the middle of the garden, and the fruit of it gives life forever. It's the same image that we see in the New Jerusalem in Revelation, right? Why does it give life? Well, Proverbs chapter 3 says that God's wisdom is the tree of life that gives us the wisdom to shine in our paths and give us life, providing light and peace wherever we should go. [Proverbs 3:16](#) through 18. This is what the priests saw inside the tabernacle when they worked daily with the light illuminating.

Ezekiel also has a symbolic depiction of an eschatological temple at the end of the book, [Ezekiel 40](#) through 48. It's a section of Ezekiel that's apocalyptic literature. It's symbolic, it's imagery. The book of Ezekiel starts out with an apocalyptic vision and it ends the same way—the book ends. But in this temple, Ezekiel's temple, in chapter 47, it speaks of a river of life, giving water, right? And it just spurts out from the temple and it sprouts up trees on both sides of its banks everywhere it goes. When it hits salt water, boom, it makes the salt water pure. It gives life to creatures and causes the leaves to give healing and to blossom everywhere it goes. Healing leaves, leaves that give healing to anyone that would partake of them.

Isn't that somewhere else too? Revelation. In Revelation, we also see a river flowing from the New Jerusalem, which is a temple city. And it has a tree of life that gives the leaves of healing for all nations. We're starting to connect the dots, right? Just like Titanic with the necklace—the appearance of the necklace. The river that comes from Eden through the garden and then breaks out to bring life to all nations—it's what we see in the very beginning of the Bible, and it's what we see at the very end.

The Gihon Spring and the River of Delights

The Gihon Spring was a spring that sprouts out right below the Temple Mount in Israel, in Jerusalem. It waters the gardens of the Kidron Valley—kind of neat. Also feeds the Pool of Siloam. Here's what the author of [Psalm 36](#) says about it. Psalm chapter 36, verses 7 and 9. It says, "The children of mankind"—or sorry, "oh God, people that take refuge in the shadow of

your wings, they feast on the abundance of your house." House, same word that's translated many times as temple. "You give them drink from your river of delights." Most of your translations will say "delights"; in Hebrew it literally says "Edens." You give them drink from the river of Edens. "For with you is the fountain, the river, the water of life." We have this motif again—something about living waters coming from Eden, giving healing from the trees associated with the temple of God. I love that. The water comes forth from the place that God dwells, and it brings forth life and sustenance that cannot be found anywhere else.

Mount Sinai: The Same Pattern of Holiness

After Israel leaves Egypt, they come to a big mountain that Moses is familiar with—he's already been up there. Mount—everyone's so nervous to say the answer they know because it's kind of like Mount Sinai, right? Mount Sinai. It's a place where God dwells. [Exodus 3](#), verse 1, it's called the mountain of God—same reference for Ezekiel, for the place of Eden. And just like in Eden, just like the tabernacle, Mount Sinai also has three sections of holiness that it's divided into. The majority of the Israelites remain at the foot of the mountain. The elders and the priests were allowed to go up midway of the mountain, but only one was allowed to approach the very top of the mountain to experience God's presence directly, and it was Moses—shadow of the high priest. This is the same pattern that, of course, gets implemented into the tabernacle after this, and eventually the temple in Jerusalem.

But notice the difference in the stories. In [Genesis 1](#) and 2 and 3, you have God building a garden so that man could come and dwell with him. But now, after the Exodus, he's commanding the tabernacle to be built so that he can come and dwell with man. We discussed last week what caused that separation, right? It's the whole background of the gospel. Something about this tabernacle and the temple reflects God breaking back into creation after mankind pushed him away in the story. God is breaking back in. God is dwelling among his people.

Eden Was Always Meant to Expand

The difference is, in Eden, God had a purpose to create image bearers that would expand his garden. They would go out and be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and have dominion, right? We always read that, but does that mean that they were always supposed to leave Eden? Because I thought leaving the garden was like punishment. But he says you're supposed to go fill the earth. I believe the authors are wanting us to imagine them expanding Eden, taking it with them.

That's what the prophecies of Zechariah are all about. [Zechariah 1](#), measure the line of Jerusalem, this new Jerusalem that's being built up in Zechariah's vision. And the entire city becomes a temple city. All of the pots are now holy and sanctified to the Lord. It's not just the temple—it's this whole city, this new Jerusalem, that the presence of God is going to dwell in. [Zechariah 3](#), it's described as not having any walls. Why does it not have any walls? Because of all the people and animals it's consuming. The only thing that's wrapped around it is the fire of the glory of God. All of the people and animals are supposed to have this, like—I guess with the ring of fire, you kind of have that like Armageddon, like, you know, destroy the earth. But imagine that, but it's good. You have the new Jerusalem expanding, sucking in all of creation into it to bask in the goodness of God. Eden was always meant to expand and to renovate, renew all of creation, not just a little. I love that. It's beautiful.

In Leviticus chapter 26 and [Deuteronomy 23](#), we have a phrase that keeps occurring.

God Walks Among His People

God says—[Deuteronomy 23](#) says—because the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp, he's telling them to be sanitary. We'll leave it at that. Because the Lord walks, he's walking among you. Discussion with David, [2 Samuel 7:6](#), God gets kind of short and he's like, I have not dwelled in a house since the day I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but I have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. God likes to walk. It's kind of cool. Where was the first time we see God walking? In [Genesis 3:8](#), where he walked in the cool of the day. I love that. I love that. All of it has to do with temple, the place where he resides.

So the question is, how will the trajectory of the mission of Eden occur? If the mission of Eden is for God to fully break back through in creation, his image bearers to do their mission, Eden to expand over, for him to come back, if you will, and make heaven on earth possible—how will this be accomplished? How will God's glory not be trapped in a box, in other words? How will the command to be fruitful and multiply be fulfilled? Well, God tells Abraham that's going to happen through him. All nations, the ones that went eastward and were scattered, all of them will be blessed. All will experience Eden through Abraham somehow.

Daniel's Dream and the Rock

Brings us to Daniel chapter 2. I know we're going to shift, change channels. Daniel chapter 2. King Nebuchadnezzar, the king who destroyed the temple, the first temple, invaded Judea, pulled everyone out, sent them to Babylon as punishment for their rebellion. They're in

captivity, the king of exile. He has a dream that disturbs him, and he wants someone to interpret it. So he gets all his magicians and interpreters to come in, and he's like—but there's a catch, because he was a little crazy, if you read Daniel. A little crazy. He says, I want you to tell me my dream and then interpret it, and if you don't tell me the right dream, I'm going to kill you. I mean, it's all fun and games playing the role as a magician or something in Babylon until it's like, oh man, I got to do a trick. Like, I actually got to do it.

So Daniel comes in. He says, listen, God's given me this ability, he's going to speak to you right now. Here's the dream and here's the interpretation. I love it. He repeats the dream back to him, and it's a prophecy—and it's not a new prophecy. It's a [Genesis 1, 2, and 3](#) prophecy about the expansion of God's temple over creation. And everybody loves the word of God. We're going to read a little bit of it right now.

Daniel chapter 2, verse 31. And this gives me goosebumps. I love it. We've heard it many times. Just read it with me. "While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not with human hands. It struck the statue at its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. Then the iron and clay and bronze and silver and gold were all broken into pieces and became like chaff and threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue"—listen—"became a huge mountain that filled the whole earth."

It's Eden. It's the mountain of God. It's the temple. Eden is his kingdom. The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy. So we know this has to do with real kingdoms. The statue is made up of real kingdoms on the earth. And these are kingdoms just like [Daniel 7](#), just like the book of Revelation. These are kingdoms made up of people like you and me—people who are not very good humans. And so we cause evil and destruction and injustice and violence on God's good creation, and these kingdoms embody that. When people get power, they create kingdoms and then they exploit weaker people so that they can maintain power and authority. Every nation does it, no matter how patriotic you want to be towards it. And they will not exist one day. There will only be one kingdom. And that's the prophecy. That's what we see in Revelation, [Daniel 7](#). The Son of Man is going to destroy the beasts, the kingdoms, somehow, and he's going to start his own kingdom.

So this is talking about real historical kingdoms, but the dream is still about the prophetic kingdom of God that's going to expand the rule and reign of God when God is truly in and of his creation. Bible nerds, where else do we see something not made with human hands? [Hebrews 9:11](#)—tabernacle language. That was not made with human hands. That is to say, not part of this creation. The rock from heaven, not made with human hands, is going to take out the

kingdoms that have spread over God's good creation, the beasts of the world, and destroy them. But then the rock is going to grow into a mountain, and it's not going to stop like the blob—but a good thing. And the mountain is going to fill the entire earth, the mountain of God's kingdom.

The Rock and the Cornerstone

This rock, this stone—the rock is the cornerstone of the mountain. Can I put that in the story? It's the rock that's going to become the cornerstone for the mountain of God, the temple that's going to fill the earth. [Psalm 118](#): "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The Lord has done this and it is marvelous in our eyes. The Lord has done it in this very day. Let us rejoice and be glad."

So we have this language that's still floating around in the story. The temple is more than just a building or a tent or a mountain in the story of God. The temple has been pointing us to the true rock that will grow and fill the earth. And we know who that is. It's Yeshua.

The irony of it all—the irony of it all—is where does this rock first strike? It strikes the physical temple in Jerusalem, as far as pertaining to the prophecy of the growing mountain. Throughout Israel's history, and even the first century, the temple had gone from a place of reverence and symbolism, a place where God dwells among his people, being the embodiment of the mission of God to the world, just like the story says—to becoming an idol in the story, to being a way to harness and manipulate God. It became a way to manipulate people and lord over them with power.

We Do This With the Bible Too

It's the same thing we've done with the Bible today, if I can say that. We totally do that. The Bible is a story that leads us to God, but it's not God himself. And sometimes we like to use it that way so we can weaponize it and oppress other people and make ourselves feel powerful or maintain power. The Bible is not a genie lamp that can be harnessed to give us power over others. We are not meant to be the Jafar. The Bible is meant to carry the message of freedom, the jubilee of God, and the jubilee is only found in Yeshua.

And in [Matthew 21](#), the way Matthew directs this scene of Yeshua's ministry—I don't even know how to describe it. Yeshua is so bold, and he doesn't take prisoners. I know that's an oxymoron type of thing—doesn't take prisoners when it comes to God's wrath and who he's targeting and who he says is going to experience it. So Jesus enters into Jerusalem riding on a donkey and her colt, as the new king, and he enters the temple and he flips the tables. Love

that. That's our favorite scene, right? We love seeing Jesus get a little violent because we're Americans—that's what we're built on. I mean, that's how our country was founded. It's kind of in our blood, like violence is a little bit okay, right? That's how we—I don't think it is, but whatever. So we love seeing Jesus get what we perceive as a little bit violent.

And we always ignore what he does next. He flips the tables—yeah, yeah, that's right, yeah yeah, I want to do that, you know. And then, insert: nevermind. So he flips the tables, and then he begins healing people in the temple. We always like to minimize that, right? He's actually just bringing the temple back to what it's supposed to be. He enters the temple and overthrows the tables. He sees the temple as something that has become a place where others can exploit and take advantage of the weak. "You den of robbers." This is the epitome of everything the God of the Bible is against in the story. That's why Israel went into Babylon. That's why they went into exile. He hates this.

Indignant at Healing

And then Yeshua begins healing people at the temple. And the chief priests and the teachers of the law—the ones who just knew the Bible inside and out, the ones who were commissioned to be the mascots of God's kingdom—it says that they saw all the wonderful things that Jesus was doing, and the children were shouting out, "Hosanna, son of David." And it says they were indignant. Indignant. Jesus overthrows the tables in the temple, and then he begins healing the people in the temple. Yeshua is here giving the leaves of healing of Eden at the temple, like [Ezekiel 47](#) says. That's what he's doing. And the people who thought themselves to be the most righteous, the most faithful, the most loyal, the most qualified to represent God in the world, were indignant.

Why? Because they found heaven on earth by using God to suppress others, to take advantage of others, to marginalize others, to use the mission of God to keep people out of the kingdom. [Matthew 23](#) says, if you find yourselves using the holy words of God to elevate yourself, to use as a weapon on others, to close the gate of the kingdom of God, to control and to manipulate other people, you are no more a follower of God than these chief priests and teachers of the law.

You're no more a follower of God than the great prophet Jonah who would rather die than allow God's grace to be exposed to people that he thought didn't deserve it. These are the people that the rock strikes first. So how does Jesus respond? Well, he kind of infers that. In the temple, he goes on to tell a parable about the farmers that were put in charge of the master's vineyard, and they end up killing the son of the master because they're like, hey, the son's gonna inherit the

vineyard, and if he does that, then he'll take our power away from us. Same story, different year, right? Jesus said to them, surely you have read the scriptures. The stone that the builders rejected becomes the cornerstone. The Lord did this, and it is wonderful. Quote [Psalm 118](#).

The Stone the Builders Rejected

So he goes on to say in chapter 21, verse 43. He's using [Daniel 7](#) language. It's not just like a little stone that's like in the temple. It's a stone that's going to fall from the sky and kill you. Crush you. Sorry, graphic sound effects. Destroy the kingdoms that we've built up that ravage and rape God's good creation. And it's coming for you. And he says that in the temple to the priests and the most esteemed Bible preachers, religious leaders. He says this rock is coming for you. Oh man.

[John 8](#) has a story about a woman, a sinner who's thrown in the ground. And the religious are using the Bible to try to show her that she is lesser than them. We should stone her. That's what the Bible says. We know about the Bible. Oh, we gotta be so careful. We gotta be so careful. Because every time we do that, Jesus is drawing a line in the sand. Matt, are you saying we shouldn't call out sin? Oh, yeah, we gotta call out sin. We gotta get hell out of earth, right? But if there's one thing that the story of the Bible tells us, you gotta look at the heart that's inside your chest first. Because you'll be surprised. You'll be surprised.

Looking at the Heart

Unlike Matthew and Mark. Everybody still good? I get excited because the story. You see what I mean when I'm talking about the story of God? We're not just isolating a chapter or a book. We're looking at the story. So unlike Matthew and Mark, John moves the chronology of Yeshua's ministry around. John is allowed to do that. He's directing his own film. Matthew and Mark are not directing his film. He's directing his film for a specific purpose. And so John intentionally moves the chronology of when Jesus flips the tables around in his ministry. Instead of occurring at the end of his ministry, John begins the ministry of Yeshua with Jesus turning the water into wine and then heading straight over to the temple to flip the tables. Love that.

John chapter 2, verse 19. After he flips the tables, this is what he says. Jesus answered them, Destroy this temple and I will raise it up again in three days. They replied, It took 46 years to renovate this temple and you're going to raise it up in three days? But the temple he had spoken about was his. Now, if you knew the story of the Bible and you come to this verse in John, a lot of things are going to start clicking and lights are going to flash, right? It's like, wait a second,

wait a second. The rock and Eden and the waters of life and the garden and God's kingdom on earth and the healing. He was speaking about the temple being himself. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus spoke. John's focus in retelling his story this way is he wants to emphasize that Jesus is the new temple. He's the one that emphasizes that in his story.

The New Temple

John chapter 7, verse 37. Yeshua's talking and says, On the last day, in the climax of the festival, here we are at the Feast of Tabernacles, right? During the water drawing ceremony. Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds. He says, Anyone who is thirsty may come to me. Anyone who believes in me may come and drink. For the scriptures declare rivers of living water will flow from his heart. When he said living water, he was speaking of the Spirit who would be given to everyone believing in him, but the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet entered the glory. So there's a ceremony during Sukkot at the temple where they would draw water up from the spring and they would come up and they would pour it out on the altar. It's supposed to give flashbacks of the living waters from Eden. But here Yeshua stands up and he says, Hey, you guys want some real living water? So if we believe in him, then the rivers of living water will flow out from us is what he says. Did you catch that? But where is the source? What's the source of the living water if it's going to flow out of us? Yeshua. He's the source of the living water that breaks into rivers and flows out from us. Just like the living water comes forth from Eden into the garden and breaks into rivers and flows out to give life to the rest of the world in [Genesis 2](#). It's Eden language. Water flows from Eden. Just like the vision of [Ezekiel 47](#) illustrates.

The Source of Living Water

In John chapter 4, Yeshua meets a Samaritan woman at the well. And he says, I can give you living water. In [John 4](#), 13, Yeshua answered, This language is intentional. At Yeshua's trial in [Matthew 26](#), the accusation against Yeshua, what were they trying to pin him on to kill him? He said he would destroy the temple. Blasphemy. You said you'd destroy the temple and raise it back up. That's what everything was orbiting around. And it's not just in the story of Yeshua. And Matthew didn't want to emphasize that just because this is part of the story. That is one of the overwhelming themes of from Genesis all the way to Revelation. It's a huge, huge big deal, and it reinforces everything Yeshua came to do.

As he is nailed to his new throne and exalted up and proclaimed king, we still see the same theme of God's temple, personified Eden among us, the giver of living water. John alone—the same John that speaks about the living water that Yeshua has, same John that emphasizes Yeshua being the temple—the same John is the only one that emphasizes the Roman soldier taking a spear. What's he do with the spear? He pierces the side of Yeshua and out flowed blood and water. It didn't dribble, dribble. It didn't squirt. It didn't run out. It flowed out. What makes the waters of Eden so life-giving? I believe John answers the question. The waters of Eden are life-giving because of the blood of the Lamb. This is what gives life.

From Genesis to Revelation

How will we return to Eden? How will we return to the place where we dwell and rest with God without the context of sin? How will we get back to the mission of the entire world seeing and feeling the reflection of who God is? How will we enter into the true temple of God experiencing his presence and beauty and grace and mercy and blessing? There's only one way. There's only one door. There's only one path. That is only through the person of Yeshua, the true temple of Yahweh. When we find ourselves in him, in Eden, we find ourselves reflections of that. We find ourselves being the place where he dwells. And so we have this paradox that formed in the early church. Jesus is the true place of God's presence, right? God dwelt among us. He is the true temple, the true Eden, but we are being transformed into his image, according to Paul. We are his imitators, his ambassadors, which means the temple and the expansion of Eden does not stop with Yeshua. The waters flow from him into you and from you into the rest of the world. Therefore, [1 Corinthians 3.16](#) says, Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's spirit dwelled in your midst? He dwells among you now.

We Are Being Transformed

How will the story end concerning returning to the space that God made for us instead of trapping him in a space we made for him? The rock not cut with hands is growing even now into a mountain that is overtaking the world. And it's done through you being faithful servants of Yeshua. How many of you guys know you have a job? It's done through you. If you've committed yourself as a follower of Yeshua, believe in him and his mission, loyalty, commitment, faithfulness, you're part of that mountain. Just like in Revelation, you're part of the new Jerusalem. Symbolic imagery. You're part of that. But it comes with a warning. God's temple is sacred space. It is holy. It is pure. God's temple does not tolerate wickedness and evil of the heart. God's temple does not harbor sin because that's what pushed heaven away, right?

That's what pushed the true temple away in the story. So on one end, you have a warning. Repent, turn, leave that here and come back over here. Allow Yeshua to take that and let it go and accept that mercy and forgiveness and now replicate and imitate it.

The Warning and the Mission

So on one hand, you have the warning. You can't bring that into the kingdom of God. You can't bring that into God's temple. An image bearer cannot reflect that. But on the other hand, you have a mission. And the mission seeks love, mercy, and justice in the story of God. That's what you experience in Eden. And so I don't know where you're at today, but here in the U.S., we have so much potential to fill the role we are called to fill in pouring out the life-giving waters of God in the same way Yeshua did. So much potential even right now. Potential. Potential. And we don't want to. Let's be honest. We don't want to. Because the way that Yeshua did it, and he told us to do it, is through self-sacrifice for people that we don't think deserve it.

Radical Generosity and Crossroads

Radical generosity of our resources, of our time, of our energy. Imagine a nation burdened by a recession. Imagine it is the people of God that stand out as being generous. God, what an opportunity we have. What potential. Imagine the world in turmoil, families struggling, children. Children are going to be flooding into the foster care system in all states for many different reasons. Children need safe homes. The poor will continue to be with us. The desperate, those without hope, will be seeking it. Will you continue to be satisfied with exploiting them to fuel your self-righteous pride? Or will you see that Yeshua has flipped those tables? He's invited you to be a part of the fount of Eden. You can be crushed by the rock or you can be a part of the mountain. And that's the ultimate crossroads that we come to when we encounter the King Yeshua, the place of Yahweh's presence on earth.

Hope and Conviction

And so I hope—I hope—looking at the Bible as a whole illuminates the things and the character that Yeshua presents. I hope it makes you fall more in love with the mission that he's called you to be a part of. I hope it's convicting that you would search your heart and allow the Holy Spirit to do what it does best—at least in me—and clean house so that you can be filled with the goodness that overflows to others. You can be a vessel of the living waters. If you want to explore this topic more, there's a great resource I put in the description of the video you can go back and look at.

This is serious. The people who put together the Bible knew what they were doing when they collaborated this, when they put this together. And the New Testament authors knew what they were doing when they said, "I'm going to move the flipping of the tables to the front of Yeshua's ministry." We could all have been out of shape about that. Well, it's not right. No, it is right. Because we're going to emphasize what the point is. Will we pay attention to that? Will we yield? Will we accept the mission? Or will we become indignant because we enjoy power?

A Time of Worship

I don't know where you are today. But I ask that you would stand and worship. We end every service with a time of worship and our worship team can come up. This is a time where you can worship, you can praise, you can pray, you can remain silent, you can remain seated. It's a time of meditation and reflection on who this person is—this Yeshua—as our King, as the true Eden. And if you need prayer today, we have a prayer team on either side of the stage, on the sides of the room. Take advantage of that. If you need someone to lift you up, if you're going through a situation, I don't know what you're going through. Or if you want to leave something here today, we're called to be a part of the mountain. We're called to be the ambassadors of Eden on earth.

Alvino Moceno, our Father, our King, Father, we thank you for this opportunity to explore your word. We thank you for this opportunity that you would invite us into your story. And Father, we ask that the living waters—which is your Holy Spirit—would consume us to the point where we would overflow into the world, that truly the mountain would overtake the world, that there would be no walls on it because of the amount of people that continue to reside in it. We thank you, Father, for your kingdom and your King Yeshua. In his name we pray. Amen.

Blessing

Sing the Shema. Shema Yisra'el. Shema Yisra'el. Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. Blessed is the name of his glorious kingdom for all eternity. May the God of patience and encouragement grant you to be like-minded with one another in the manner of Messiah, so that together with one voice, you glorify the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua, the Messiah. May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his countenance towards you and give you peace. Shabbat shalom. Amen. Shalom.

I'm Matthew Vanderells, and I hope you enjoyed this message. Founded in Truth exists to build a community that bears the image of God and lives the redeemed life only Yeshua gives. If this message impacted you or if this ministry has been a blessing to you, we invite you to take part in making sure the message of Yeshua and the truth of God's word continues to reach others. To make sure this happens, you can donate through our online giving portal at foundedintruth.com/give or by texting any amount to 704-275-0752. Don't forget to like and subscribe for new content every single week. And we thank you for your continued support. And we look forward to seeing you next time. Shalom.

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