

Temple Talk

Deuteronomy 12:5, 2 Samuel 7:13, Psalm 132

Detailed outline from the Sermon on November 11, 2007

Why a temple?

- For the *Name* of the Lord (1 Kings 5:3); a place for God's glory to be put on display.
- An icon of the covenant (1 Kings 6:11-12, 9:1-9) A symbol of God's sustained interest in this relationship.
- A place for the Ark of the Covenant (1 Kings 8)
- A gathering place for pilgrims and festivals (Psalm 42.4)
- A place to bring sacrifices (Ezra 6:3)
- A place to honor God

Imagine the value in an agricultural society of coming together; and in a day when many lived in simple dwellings, imagine the force of approaching the magnificent temple as an entryway to meeting God more personally.

Solomon's Temple

- The dimensions, pieces and parts (1 Kings 5); Cedar paneling from Lebanon lining the insides, stone perfectly shaping the exterior, pine floors, bronze pillars carved and capped with lilies, pomegranates and palms, 2 cherubim 10 cubits high carved of olive wood 5 cubit wings touching each wall, all overlaid with gold.
- The Most High Place (1 Kings 6:16, 19) is for the Ark of the Covenant.
- The dedication (1 Kings 8)
- The destruction (2 Chronicles 36:19)

Ezra's Temple (Zerubbabel's Temple)

- The altar rebuilt (Ezra 3)

- The Temple rebuilt (Ezra 3-6)
- The dedication (Ezra 6: 16-18). “But some wept.” (Ezra 3: 11-12)

Herod’s Temple

- Expansion and beautification
- Destruction

Jesus and the Temple

- Dedicated there (Luke 2:21) as a child (Simeon and Anna)
- Childhood pilgrimage (Luke 2:41) sitting among teachers, listening and asking questions. People were amazed.
- Cleansing the Temple (Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, John 2)
- Jesus *in* the Temple (Luke 19:47, John 7:14) when he came for festivals and during his last week.
- Jesus *is* the Temple (John 2:19). “What miraculous sign can you do to prove your authority?” “Tear down this temple and I will raise it again in three days.” “It’s taken 46 years to build this temple and you can raise it in 3 days?”
- The veil of the Temple (Mark 15:38, Hebrews 10:19-20); no more separation; we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place

The latest Temple model

- John 4:21-24 to the woman at the well, “A time is coming when it won’t matter what mountain...true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.”
- Acts 17:24 Paul at the Aeropagus, “God who made the world and everything in it does not live in temples made with human hands.”
- 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19
- 2 Corinthians 6:16 don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s spirit lives in you?

Do we still need temples? (Hebrews 10:25)

- Do not neglect assembling together.

- Different seasons and opinions.
- I'm a big fan of church...
- "American obsession with buildings."
- But these are not temples.
- The deader the body, the bigger the shrine.

Cleansing the temple today

- Lay a good foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11-15) The foundation is Jesus Christ.
- Some degree of separation (2 Corinthians 6:17)
 - Don't be yoked to unbelievers.
 - "Come out from among them." (Isaiah 52:11, Ezekiel 20:34, 41) "I will bring you from the nations and gather you with a mighty hand."
 - We are to be a royal priesthood and holy nation. Holy means set apart for noble purposes. Some separation is required. I can't tell you how much to separate. You can't tell me.
 - The worst of religion is formulas and rules. Can you imagine telling Jesus he can't have supper with prostitutes and tax collectors?
 - Still, all of us need enough separation.
- Watch out for contaminants (2 Corinthians 7:1) Part of this is sin, part of this is body care, mostly, it's about honor.
- A vessel to honor God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) you don't take a Rembrandt and use it as a doormat. (Ephesians 2:10) The bigger sadness is unrealized potential for good.
- A worthy sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2)
 - Self presentation
 - The sadness of rescinding the office
 - The Shekinah of God living in and through me. Animated by God's will and word, love and joy, purpose and presence.