

The True and Better Temple

1 Kings 6

INTRODUCTION: There are three ways a Preacher approaches a sermon.

1. **Biblical Exposition** - This is when a Preacher chooses a section of scripture, explains its context, then draws out the meaning of the text as it meant to the original audience and develops applications and implications for the modern audience.
2. **Systematic Theology** - This is when a Preacher selects a particular doctrine then proves or defends with many verse from all over the Bible.
3. **Biblical Theology** - This is when a Preacher pulls one concept and traces it through the whole storyline of scripture. It's like taking a thread and tracing it through an entire garment.

ILLUSTRATION: Think of it this way - Biblical Theology is like zooming out on google earth. Exposition is street view. Systematic is explaining the difference between a street and an interstate.

Today we are going to be doing biblical theology. We are tracing the theme of **TEMPLE** through the whole bible.

Remember back in **Exodus** when God told Moses that he would not dwell with the people, but rather he would visit them by meeting with Moses in a **TENT** outside the camp. Moses said, "well just let us die in the dessert then." The most important thing to Moses was God's closeness, God's presence.

So God gives Moses very specific instructions about how to build the Tabernacle - Moses obey's. Then Exodus concludes with:

Exodus 40:34–38 (ESV)

³⁴ Then the **cloud** covered the tent of meeting, and the **glory** of the Lord filled the tabernacle. ³⁵ And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. ³⁶ Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. ³⁷ But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. ³⁸ For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

That was the pattern until they **settled in the land**. Once the people settled in the land, the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire were no longer needed to lead the people on their way. Nevertheless, the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place once a year, sprinkling the prescribed blood on the top of the ark of the covenant, located between the two cherubim, the place where the LORD manifested himself in glory.

NOW - The **TABERNACLE** could not contain all there was of God, but it was the place where God's presence was manifest. It was the focal point of all of Israel's worship.

Now, fast forward to the reign of King David. In **2 Samuel 7** - David has it on his heart to build a **TEMPLE**. The Temple David envisioned would simply be a more permanent version of the tabernacle. God, however, does not allow David to build the temple, he reserves that for Solomon. David purchases the property and gathers material that one day Solomon would use.

1 Kings 6:1 (ESV)

¹ In the four hundred and eightieth year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the Lord.

The Bible's description of Solomon's Temple (also called The First Temple) suggests that the inside ceiling was 180 feet long, 90 feet wide, and 50 feet high. The highest point on the Temple that King Solomon built was actually 120 cubits tall (about 20 stories or about 207 feet).

The Temple required more than 150,000 laborers more than 8 years to construct. Everything was layered in gold: According to **1 Chronicles**, Solomon used more than 4000 tons of gold and 40,000 tons of silver.

- The price of what he used, in today's value, would be more than 160 trillion dollars. That is trillion, as in "T."
- One scholar said the amount of gold Solomon used in the temple was about 4–5% of all the gold ever mined on earth. As in, of all of the gold we've ever mined on earth, 1/20 of it was in one building.
- And then there were the precious stones—marble and onyx and rubies and emeralds—that were all over the walls and the pillars. This thing had serious bling power.

NOW in many ways the TEMPLE was an attempt to Recreate Eden. Eden was in a sense the First Temple.

1. **Eden and the Temple were places of God's unique presence.** Eden was the place where God walked back and forth with man, paralleled this with later references to the Tabernacle (Gen. 3:8 with Lev. 26:12, Deut. 23:14; 2 Sam. 7:6–7).

God told Moses in Leviticus 26:11–12 (ESV)

¹¹ I will make my dwelling among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. ¹² And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.

2. **Eden and the Temple were places where Priests mediated God's will.** Adam was placed in the garden to "cultivate and keep it" that same Hebrew phrase is used elsewhere in the OT to describe the work of the priest (Num. 3:7–8; 8:25–26; 18:5–6; 1 Chr. 23:32; Ezek. 44:14).
3. **Eden and the Temple were places of guarding cherubim.** After sin was introduced into the garden, Adam and Eve are barred from the tree of life by cherubim. Similarly, over the ark of the covenant two Cherubim are placed.

4. **Eden and the Temple were placed on a mountain.** Eden was situated upon a mountain (Ezek. 28:14, 16) just like Mount Zion (Ex. 15:17) and the eschatological temple (Ezek. 40:2; 43:12; Rev. 21:10).
5. **Eden and the Temple had an eastern facing entrance.** Like the future tabernacle and temples, Eden was entered from the east (Gen. 3:24 with Ezek. 40:6).
6. **Eden and the Temple were places both employed garden imagery.** Temple references in the OT possess botanical, garden-like features.

1 Kings 6:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ The cedar within the house was carved in the form of gourds and open flowers. All was cedar; no stone was seen.

1 Kings 6:29 (ESV)

²⁹ Around all the walls of the house he carved engraved figures of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, in the inner and outer rooms.

1 Kings 7:20 (ESV)

²⁰ The capitals were on the two pillars and also above the rounded projection which was beside the latticework. There were two hundred pomegranates in two rows all around, and so with the other capital.

1 Kings 7:22 (ESV)

²² And on the tops of the pillars was lily-work. Thus the work of the pillars was finished.

1 Kings 7:26 (ESV)

²⁶ 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.

So you see - the temple was to remind the people of Eden when Mankind and our creator were at peace.

We are told that when the ark was placed in the Inner Sanctum of the Temple -

1 Kings 8:10–11 (ESV)

¹⁰ And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a **cloud** filled the house of the Lord, ¹¹ 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.

1 Kings 8:22–66 (ESV)

²² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven, ²³ and said, “O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping **covenant** and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart;

²⁷ **“But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!**

28 Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his plea, O Lord my God, listening to the cry and to the prayer that your servant prays before you this day, 29 that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you have said, 'My name shall be there,' that you may listen to the prayer that your servant offers toward this place. 30 And listen to the plea of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. And listen in heaven your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.

He goes on to say that when we drift from you and return, hear our prayers and forgive us.

41 "Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for your name's sake 42 (for they shall hear of your great name and your mighty hand, and of your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this house, 43 hear in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name.

Now that is very important - that is the verse Jesus refers to later when he says, **Mark 11:17 (ESV)** 17 And he was teaching them and saying 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."

62 Then the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the Lord. 63 Solomon offered as peace offerings to the Lord 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord.

So remember when man was cast out of eden - there was a cherub with a turning sword guarding the entrance back - getting back to the presence of the Lord required death, bloodshed... here we see thousands of sacrifices as the Temple is dedicated.

That was the pinnacle of Israel's glory in the OT.

But we are told that Solomon's heart began to drift and people of the nation drifted as well. He had a weakness for women - he took 700 wives and 300 concubines (sort of a half wife). Now God tolerated and accommodated the people when they took multiple wives but his plan from the beginning was one Eve for one Adam.

As if it were not bad enough that there were so many women - they were also Pagan women who didn't worship the God who manifested himself in the Temple. They brought foreign idols into the house of Solomon. Solomon begins to worship them and build temples for them as well.

ILLUSTRATION: It's like Elvis Presley many years ago would wear a necklace with:

- A Star of David – to represent Judaism

- An Islamic Crescent – to represent Islam
- A Buddha – to represent Buddhism
- And a Cross – to represent Christianity

A reporter asked him one day, “Mr. Presley why so many symbols?” He replied, “It’s better to be safe than to be sorry”

But friend, God is a jealous God and he will not share you affections. The first and most repeated command was to love God with all your heart and have NO OTHER GOD’S before him.

One of the Saddest chapters in all the Bible for a Jew is Ezekiel 10.

Ezekiel 10:4 (ESV)

⁴ And the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub to the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the Lord.

Ezekiel 10:18–19 (ESV)

¹⁸ Then the glory of the Lord went out from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim. ¹⁹ And the cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth before my eyes as they went out, with the wheels beside them. And they stood at the entrance of the **east gate** of the house of the Lord, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them.

Remember how Adam and Eve were sent out the Eastern Gate of Eden....Now God is leaving East of the Temple.

Ezekiel 11:23 (ESV)

²³ And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain that is on the east side of the city.

The Mountain on the East Side of the city was the **Mount of Olives**, it was from there that the Glory of God left Earth and ascended into Heaven.

The Judgement of God fell on Israel and the people were dispersed- some to Babylon some to Assyria. The **Assyrians** invaded the Northern 10 tribes of Israel in 722 B.C.and carried them off to captivity, and then the **Babylonians** came in 586 B.C. and took captive the final two, Southern tribes...

In the year 587BC Nebuchadnezzar II, King of the Babylonian Empire destroys **Solomon’s Temple**.

70 years later God began to free his people from captivity we read of that return in Ezra and Nehemiah - Zerubbabel the Governor rebuilds the temple and sacrifices return.

Fast Forward around 500 years later. Rome is the superpower and Israel is under Roman authority. **Herod** an Edomite puppet King has been appointed by Caesar as King in Israel. **Herod has rebuilt the temple**, it’s nice but it’s nothing like it was in the days of Solomon. The ark is gone, the holy objects are lost... but other than that worship continued.

It is at this point Jesus around the age of 33 makes a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Interestingly,

Jesus begins his entry into Jerusalem from the **Mount of Olives...notice how Jesus is retracing the departure of Ezekiel's day...**

Luke 19:28–29 (ESV)

28 And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples.

From there Jesus enters Jerusalem through the Eastern Gate.

The People seem to grasp the significance of the event because they celebrated... **interestingly they waved PALM BRANCHES... like were in the Temple.... like were in Eden.**

We are told in Isaiah that when Messiah comes - Isaiah 55:12 (ESV)

12 "For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Jesus makes his way to Herod's temple... and he finds a market place of all places set up in the Gentile Court - literally 1,000's of people being cheated and mistreated by the Jewish leaders. Now keep in mind - Solomon had prayed the the peoples of the whole world would be able to come and pray to the God of Israel at the temple...but the Jews were intercepting and monetizing their seeking of God.

Jesus consumed with Zeal for God's House makes a whip and drives out the money changers. Why? Because this was supposed to be a place where the NATIONS could come and pray to God.

What is all of this about? Well **Jesus is the Glory of God returning to the Temple**. He is Immanuel, "God with Us", All that Eden represented was found in Him. All that the Tabernacle and the Temple represented were fulfilled in Jesus.

- But wait - when we were cast out of Eden there was a sword turning every direction to say, "The only way back into Eden is through death".
- When Solomon dedicated the Temple 142,000 animals died.

But this time it wouldn't be the death of an animal - but of Jesus himself. He would be the true and better sacrifice that would bring the glory to the temple.

Not only that - **John 2:19–22 (ESV)**

19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" 21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Matthew 12:6 (ESV)

6 I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.

- **Jesus is the ultimate Temple that David yearned for.**
- **Jesus is the True and Better Temple that Solomon could not build.**

Don't you see - in the New Heaven and New Earth John tells us in Revelation 21:22 (ESV)

²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

So just as the Nations were invited to reach out toward the temple in Solomon's day - **today we don't seek a place - we seek a person.** We reach out to Jesus, he forgives, he heals, he protects, he sets the captive free.

But we must be careful - lest our hearts drift like they did in the days of Solomon.

1. We were created to WORSHIP God - Eden, Temple, Jesus

- The term **WORSHIP** is derived from the Old English word meaning, "worth - ship". It is an attribution of worth or value.
- We commonly speak of worship in conjunction with the word, "**PRAISE**". Which is where we get our word appraisal, which means to attribute value to something.

So we show our devotion, value or love for God through worship. We value Him, His Word, His presence above all else.

2. Satan primary goal is to misdirect our worship from God to Idols.

He desires to get you to love, value, and worship anything but God. Thus breaking the greatest command, thereby committing the greatest sin. **This greatest sin is called, "Idolatry".**

The most repeated command is this, "have no other gods before me". Also forbidding idolatry.

EXAMPLE: In the garden Satan tempted Adam to value his word more than God's Word.

So idolatry isn't always bowing down to a statue, but it's when anything takes a place of greater prominence in our lives than God.

Colossians 3:5 (NASB95)

⁵ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

- Sexual Sin - Idolatry
- Impurity, like pornography, lust - idolatry
- Evil Desires - idolatry
- Greed - Idolatry

The Romans had:

- VENUS the goddess of Sex and Lust
- DISPATAR (GR. PLUTO) the god of wealth
- BACCHUS the god of drunkenness
- APOLLO the god of music
- FAMA the goddess of fame.
- JUVENTAS the goddess of youth

All of those things are considered by many people in our culture as more valuable than Christ.

I Corinthians 10:19-20, Paul tells us that behind idols is a demon. A legitimate personality, a fallen angel, a follower of Satan.

So demons are willing to work through anyone or anything to convert them into an idol, thus misdirect your worship.

Any time you are willing to obey someone or something more than Christ you are being seduced by the enemy and you are a practicing Idolater.

3. The Gospel wages war on our Idols to Recapture Worship for God.

Throughout the Old and New testaments you will see that God wages war on Idols.

You see the primary purpose of the Gospel is NOT your personal conversion.

That's an Awesome benefit but it's secondary not primary. ***The primary purpose of the Gospel is to bring glory to God.***