

“In My Father’s House”

***The Theme of TEMPLE from Genesis to Revelation -
What the Bible is All About From Start to Finish***

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Title: Eden Expands – Go Into All the World

Text: Selected Texts from the Prophets

Reading: Ezekiel 28:1-19

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Introduction

A well-written story comes full circle. As it begins, so it ends. Something is lost, perhaps – and then after a long plot and struggle, it is restored and even exceeded. Wrongs are put right. Fortunes are regained. And the people are all the better for having gone through their struggles.

So it is in the chief story line of the Bible. Eden is lost, seemingly forever. Terrible hardships ensue. Wicked men rise to power. But there is this small, insignificant “tune” playing in the background. It grows and grows, until it becomes a symphony and overwhelms evil. Paradise appears once more – better than ever, this time filling the earth and all the cosmos and never to be lost again. You know the thing – right? You listen to an orchestra playing and there is unity provided by a recurring melody. Ultimately that melody fills everything as more and more of the instruments are playing it. God’s work of redemption in Christ is like that – it is playing, until one day it will fill the Cosmos. Imagine standing in front of those huge mountains at Lake Louise up in Banff Park and you hear the music of redemption emanating from the peaks themselves as all of creation gives unhindered glory to God for Christ.

One of the little “tunes” that grows and grows from Genesis to Revelation is the *temple*. In some ways in fact, it is THE tune of Scripture and Christ is the Director of the orchestra, the Player of the music. It is this theme we have been learning about these past weeks –

Lev 26:11-12 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.

Lev 26:11-12 'Además, haré Mi morada en medio de ustedes, y Mi alma no los aborrecerá. (12) 'Andaré entre ustedes y seré su Dios, y ustedes serán Mi pueblo.

Understand this theme that we have been calling Temple, and you will understand the Bible. Which is to say, you will understand God and His great purpose of redemption in Jesus Christ. If I can help you hear and recognize the “music” of this redemption so that you can hear it’s crescendo rising and rising as you proceed through the Scriptures, then I will have succeeded in my purpose. You will be ready for heaven.

A Little Eden

One of the keys to understanding the theme of TEMPLE, and thus to understanding the gospel itself, is to recognize that the tabernacle/temple is what we might call “a little Eden.” That is to say,

“The tabernacle in the wilderness and the subsequent temple at Jerusalem is a model of Eden. Eden itself was a temple, and all forms of the temple – Eden, the tabernacle, the temple at Jerusalem, and the Church as God’s temple – are models of the entire cosmos as God intended the cosmos to be. And the temple grows as we progress through the Scriptures. It grows from a small

tent in the wilderness among the smallest of nations, until it embraces all nations and fills the earth. That is to say, Eden and the tabernacle/temple is a model of the New Heavens and the New Earth where God will once again dwell with man.”

How do we know this? That Eden was a temple and that the tabernacle and temple were models of Eden? *Because of the many similarities between them.* Listen and you will see – I have highlighted the points of similarity in boldface -

Gen 2:7-17 then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. (8) And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. (9) And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up **every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.** (10) **A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden,** and there it divided and became four rivers. (11) The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around **the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.** (12) **And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.** (13) The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. (14) And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. (15) **The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.** (16) **And the LORD God commanded the man,** saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, (17) but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

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 that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Gen 2:7-17 Entonces el SEÑOR Dios formó al hombre del polvo de la tierra, y sopló en su nariz el aliento de vida, y fue el hombre un ser viviente. (8) Y el SEÑOR Dios plantó un huerto hacia el oriente, en Edén, y puso allí al hombre que había formado. (9) **El SEÑOR Dios hizo brotar de la tierra todo árbol agradable a la vista y bueno para comer. Asimismo, en medio del huerto, hizo brotar el árbol de la vida y el árbol del conocimiento (de la ciencia) del bien y del mal.** (10) **Del Edén salía un río para regar el huerto,** y de allí se dividía y se convertía en *otros* cuatro ríos. (11) El nombre del primero es Pisón. **Este es el que rodea toda la tierra de Havila, donde hay oro.** (12) **El oro de aquella tierra es bueno; allí hay bedelio y ónice.** (13) El nombre del segundo río es Gihón. Este es el que rodea la tierra de Cus. (14) El nombre del tercer río es Tigris. Este es el que corre al oriente de Asiria. Y el cuarto río es el Eufrates. (15) **El SEÑOR Dios tomó al hombre y lo puso en el huerto del Edén para que lo cultivara y lo cuidara.** (16) **Y el SEÑOR Dios ordenó al hombre:** "De todo árbol del huerto podrás comer, (17) pero del árbol del conocimiento (de la ciencia) del bien y del mal no comerás, porque el día que de él comas, ciertamente morirás."

Gen 3:24 Expulsó, pues, al hombre; **y al oriente del huerto del Edén puso querubines,** y una espada encendida que giraba en todas direcciones para guardar el camino del árbol de la vida.

See the parallels –

1. Trees. There are tree images in the temple – the golden lampstand, for example, thought to be a symbol of the Tree of Life.
2. A river. Ultimately, imagery of the temple given by Ezekiel and later by John in Revelation, has a river proceeding from the temple.
3. Gold. There is an abundance of gold and precious stones in Eden, as well as in the temple.

4. Man to keep and cultivate. This was Adam in Eden and it is the priesthood in the tabernacle – and ultimately all of the people of God.
5. The entrance. Both in Eden and in the temple, the entrance was on the east.
6. Cherubim.
7. The Law. In fact, it is not just the garden but the Law of God that Adam was to guard and keep (which he failed to do). The tables of the Law were in the holy of holies in the ark.
8. God's presence was in Eden, and in the Holy of holies.

And what is the point of all of this? *Just as it was God's intent that Adam and Eve so cultivate and keep Eden so that it would grow and expand and fill the whole earth with the presence and knowledge of God, so it is His purpose in Christ that the temple, the place of His dwelling, grow and expand and fill the earth until all the cosmos is full of the knowledge and glory of God. This is why it is the mission of the Church, the present temple, to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every nation. All of this is possible only because Christ has come as a second and last Adam, a faithful High Priest, to do what the first Adam, and Noah, and Israel all failed to do. He has guarded and kept the Law of God. He has paid the price of the first Adam's sin. So that one day, the temple of God will fill the whole cosmos – Eden will be what it was supposed to be. The New heavens and the New earth.*

And this is why as you read the OT prophets for example, you will come across imagery of and references to *Eden*. Listen to God's original charge to Adam – to *man* –

Gen 1:28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Gen 1:28 Dios los bendijo y les dijo: "Sean fecundos y multiplíquense. Llenen la tierra y sométanla. Ejerzan dominio sobre

los peces del mar, sobre las aves del cielo y sobre todo ser viviente que se mueve sobre la tierra."

NOTE: THIS is man's purpose. It is your purpose. As a nation of priests and kings, God's people are to take the knowledge of God into all the world. We are to preach and teach His Word, His Law – and make disciples, calling people everywhere to believe and obey Christ. When we walk in the Spirit, we succeed. When we yield to our sinful flesh, we are repeating the first Adam's failure. We are to be holy because God is holy and our mission is to show our Holy God to all the earth.

“The serpent is still in the Garden! The devil prowls about, tempting us, deceiving us. He has been defeated by Christ, but he still is doing all he can to lead us away from Christ. We must be on guard and resist him. This is how we expand Eden. Christian! What are you doing? To the degree that we disobey Christ, to that degree we repeat Adam's failure in Eden!”

Eden and Temple in the Prophets

T - Trinity (John 17:5, 24)

E - Eden & Eviction– (Genesis 1-3)

M - Moses (the history of Israel)

- Abraham (Genesis 12-15)
- Moses, Israel, and the Tabernacle (Exodus)

P - Poetry & Prophets Psalm 23 Ezekiel 36

L - Lamb

E - Eden Excelled

Where to begin? We want to be able to remember at least two Scripture passages in the Psalms and Prophets that speak of Temple, so we will just have to select two.

Eze 36:22-38 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about

to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. (23) And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. (24) I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. (25) **I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses,** and from all your idols I will cleanse you. (26) **And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.** (27) **And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.** (28) **You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.** (29) And I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. And I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. (30) **I will make the fruit of the tree** and the increase of the field abundant, that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations. (31) Then you will remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominations. (32) It is not for your sake that I will act, declares the Lord GOD; let that be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel. (33) "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. (34) 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. (35) **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 fortified and inhabited.'** (36) **Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I am the LORD; I have rebuilt the ruined places and replanted that which was desolate. I am the LORD; I**

have spoken, and I will do it. (37) "Thus says the Lord GOD: This also I will let the house of Israel ask me to do for them: to increase their people like a flock. (38) Like the flock for sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

Eze 36:22-38 "Por tanto, dile a la casa de Israel: 'Así dice el Señor DIOS: "No es por ustedes, casa de Israel, que voy a actuar, sino por Mi santo nombre, que han profanado entre las naciones adonde fueron. (23) "Vindicaré la santidad de Mi gran nombre profanado entre las naciones, el cual ustedes han profanado en medio de ellas. Entonces las naciones sabrán que Yo soy el SEÑOR," declara el Señor DIOS "cuando demuestre Mi santidad entre ustedes a la vista de ellas. (24) "Porque los tomaré de las naciones, los recogeré de todas las tierras y los llevaré a su propia tierra. (25) **"Entonces los rociaré con agua limpia y quedarán limpios;** de todas sus inmundicias y de todos sus ídolos los limpiaré. (26) **"Además, les daré un corazón nuevo y pondré un espíritu nuevo dentro de ustedes; quitaré de su carne el corazón de piedra y les daré un corazón de carne. (27) "Pondré dentro de ustedes Mi espíritu y haré que anden en Mis estatutos, y que cumplan cuidadosamente Mis ordenanzas. (28) "Habitarán en la tierra que di a sus padres; y ustedes serán Mi pueblo y Yo seré su Dios. (29) "Los libraré de todas sus inmundicias; llamaré al trigo y lo multiplicaré, y no traeré hambre sobre ustedes. (30) **"Y multiplicaré el fruto de los árboles** y el producto del campo, para que no reciban más el oprobio del hambre entre las naciones. (31) "Entonces se acordarán de sus malos caminos y de sus obras que no *eran* buenas, y se aborrecerán a ustedes mismos por sus iniquidades y por sus abominaciones. (32) "No hago *esto* por ustedes," declara el Señor DIOS, "sépanlo bien. Avergüéncense y abochórnense de su conducta, casa de Israel." (33) 'Así dice el Señor DIOS: "En el día que Yo los limpie de todas sus iniquidades, haré que las ciudades sean habitadas y las ruinas reedificadas. (34) "La tierra desolada**

será cultivada en vez de ser desolación a la vista de todo el que pasa. (35) **"Y dirán: 'Esta tierra desolada se ha hecho como el huerto del Edén; y las ciudades desiertas, desoladas y arruinadas están fortificadas y habitadas.'** (36) **"Y las naciones que quedan a su alrededor sabrán que Yo, el SEÑOR, he reedificado los lugares en ruinas y plantado lo que estaba desolado. Yo, el SEÑOR, he hablado y lo haré."** (37) 'Así dice el Señor DIOS: "Aún permitiré a la casa de Israel que Me pida hacer esto por ellos: Multiplicar sus hombres como un rebaño. (38) "Como el rebaño para los sacrificios, como el rebaño en Jerusalén en sus fiestas señaladas, así se llenarán las ciudades desiertas de rebaños de hombres. Entonces sabrán que Yo soy el SEÑOR."'"

All of this speaks, of course, not of the physical nation of Israel, but of the true Israel of God – the Church. Of people who by faith in Christ have been sprinkled with clean water and regenerated by the Holy Spirit. And what is the result? God *dwells among them and they are His people*. Temple, you see – fills the whole earth.

The thing is repeated in the very next chapter –

Eze 37:26-28 I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. (27) My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (28) Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore."

Eze 37:26-28 "Haré con ellos un pacto de paz; será un pacto eterno con ellos. Y los estableceré, los multiplicaré y pondré Mi santuario en medio de ellos para siempre. (27) "Mi morada estará también junto a ellos, y Yo seré su Dios y ellos serán Mi pueblo. (28) "Y las naciones sabrán que Yo, el SEÑOR, santifico a Israel, cuando Mi santuario esté en medio de ellos para siempre."'"

NOTE: While we are considering Ezekiel and the theme of Temple, we should certainly comment on Ezekiel's great temple vision as recorded in chapters 40-48, though we will only do so extremely briefly. Many Christians believe that Ezekiel's vision is of a future literal temple that will be built in the earthly Jerusalem. This, of course, means that – if the vision is taken literally – there will one day be a restored priesthood and animal sacrificial system! We reject any idea that this could happen. The fulfillment of the OT sacrifices has come – *Christ!* To go back to the symbols when the reality is here is nonsensical.

If Ezekiel's temple is not a literal one on this earth, then what is it? We propose that it IS a literal temple – *the New Heavens and the New Earth* – given in imagery and terms that were familiar to Israel. Why do we equate Ezekiel's temple with the New Heavens and the New Earth? Here are just a few reasons –

1. Verses 40:1-2 indicate that it is visionary and not a literal, earthly temple.
2. It is eternal - 43:7-9
3. There are many parallels to the eternal temple of Revelation 21-22 (no foreigner or uncircumcised can ever enter; water flows from it; there are trees)

But more specifically, the way Ezekiel ends his description 48:35 –

“And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The LORD Is There.”

Ezekiel's temple is the temple of Revelation that descends from heaven to the New Earth. It is the New Jerusalem. It is God's presence that fills the entire cosmos. Like ALL temple images in the Scriptures, Ezekiel's temple is a model of the New Heavens and the New Earth, restored in Jesus Christ.

More Examples of Temple in the Prophets

Hag 2:1-9 In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, (2) "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people, and say, (3) 'Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes? (4) Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, declares the LORD. Be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the LORD. Work, for I am with you, declares the LORD of hosts, (5) according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not. (6) For thus says the LORD of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. (7) And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts. (8) The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the LORD of hosts. (9) The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the LORD of hosts.'"

Hag 2:1-9 El *día* veintiuno del mes séptimo, vino la palabra del SEÑOR por medio del profeta Hageo: (2) "Habla ahora a Zorobabel, hijo de Salatiel, gobernador de Judá, y al sumo sacerdote Josué, hijo de Josadac, y al remanente del pueblo: (3) '¿Quién ha quedado entre ustedes que haya visto este templo en su gloria primera? ¿Y cómo lo ven ahora? Tal como está, ¿no es como nada ante sus ojos? (4) 'Pero ahora, esfuérzate, Zorobabel,' declara el SEÑOR, 'esfuérzate tú también, Josué, hijo de Josadac, sumo sacerdote, y esfuércense todos ustedes, pueblo de la tierra,' declara el SEÑOR, 'y trabajen, porque Yo estoy con ustedes,' declara el SEÑOR de los ejércitos. (5) '*Conforme* a la promesa que les hice cuando salieron de Egipto, Mi Espíritu permanece en medio de ustedes; no teman.' (6) "Porque así dice el SEÑOR de los ejércitos: 'Una vez más, dentro de poco, Yo haré temblar los cielos y la tierra, el mar y la tierra firme. (7) 'Y haré temblar a todas las naciones;

vendrán entonces los tesoros (vendrá el deseo) de todas las naciones, y Yo llenaré de gloria esta casa,' dice el SEÑOR de los ejércitos. (8) 'Mía es la plata y Mío es el oro,' declara el SEÑOR de los ejércitos. (9) 'La gloria postrera de esta casa será mayor que la primera,' dice el SEÑOR de los ejércitos, 'y en este lugar daré paz,' declara el SEÑOR de los ejércitos."

And one more –

Isa 35:1-10 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; (2) it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. (3) Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. (4) Say to those who have an anxious heart, "**Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.**" (5) **Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; (6) then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.** For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; (7) the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. (8) And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. (9) No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. (10) And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Isa 35:1-10 El desierto y el lugar desolado se alegrarán, Y se regocijará el Arabá y florecerá; Como el azafrán (2) Florecerá

copiosamente Y se regocijará en gran manera y gritará de júbilo. La gloria del Líbano le será dada, La majestad del Carmelo y de Sarón. Ellos verán la gloria del SEÑOR, La majestad de nuestro Dios. (3) Fortalezcan las manos débiles Y afiancen las rodillas vacilantes. (4) Digan a los de corazón tímido: "Esfuércense, no teman, Pues su Dios viene con venganza; La retribución vendrá de Dios mismo, Mas El los salvará." (5) Entonces se abrirán los ojos de los ciegos, Y los oídos de los sordos se destaparán. (6) El cojo entonces saltará como un ciervo, Y la lengua del mudo gritará de júbilo, Porque aguas brotarán en el desierto Y arroyos en el Arabá. (7) La tierra abrasada se convertirá en laguna, Y el secadal en manantiales de aguas. En la guarida de chacales, su lugar de descanso, La hierba se *convertirá en* cañas y juncos. (8) Allí habrá una calzada, un camino, Y será llamado Camino de Santidad. El inmundo no viajará por él, Sino que *será* para el que ande *en ese* camino. Los necios no vagarán *por él*. (9) Allí no habrá león, Ni subirá por él bestia feroz; *Estos* no se hallarán allí. Sin embargo *por allí* andarán los redimidos. (10) Volverán los rescatados del SEÑOR, Entrarán en Sion con gritos de júbilo, Con alegría eterna sobre sus cabezas. Gozo y alegría alcanzarán, Y huirán la tristeza y el gemido.

Conclusion – On the Way to Jesus

You may well have recognized in that last passage from Isaiah a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ's ministry of coming into this world and healing the sick. And this is a very fitting place to end today, because we are now ready to move on to trace the theme of Temple in the Gospels – in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ, the Temple takes a huge advance – God draws ever nearer to His purpose of “dwelling among us.” We are going to come to a clearer understanding of Christ's ministry than perhaps we have ever had before. He comes as the Last Adam to effect a New Creation. That New Creation actually arrives in Him. And as we will see, He Himself becomes the Temple. Immanuel. God with us.

“The New Earth will be a place of healing (Revelation 22:2). Christ's healing ministry was thus a foretaste of Heaven, the place where all hurts

are healed, all suffering forever eclipsed by joy. Whenever Jesus healed people, the act spoke of wholeness and health, the original perfection of Adam and Eve, and the coming perfection of resurrected bodies and spirits. Every healing was a memorial to the Eden that was and a signpost to the New Earth that will be.”

And so we shall see. You will never read the Gospels the same again.