

Biblical Theology
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Objectives

- 1.) Gain a clear overview of how Scripture fits together.
- 2.) Understand the major themes and contours of redemptive-history.
- 3.) Learn how to read and interpret the Old Testament in light of the New Testament.
- 4.) Articulate and understand how Jesus fulfills the promises of the Old Testament.
- 5.) Recognize that the church is the recipients of the promises given to Israel.
- 6.) Find our joy in Christ Jesus as the fulfillment of the entire Old Testament.

Outline

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Introduction

- The Bible does not come to us as a systematic theology book, an encyclopedia, or a dictionary of theology.

- The Bible comes to us as history, namely redemptive history or God's history.

- This study will be just as much a lesson in hermeneutics (how to read and interpret Scripture) as it is a study in biblical theology.

- While the church does begin in the NT, we must recognize the importance of OT history to better understand this new creation called the church.

- The only way we can gain a proper grasp of Christ and his church is to understand our OT in light of our NT.

- It is my belief that unless we understand the hope of Israel found in the OT, we will never truly understand who we are and what we have in Christ as his body.

The Old Testament

Interpreting the Old Testament

- Why did the OT writers frame things in a literal and nationalistic manner?

- The writers and prophets of the OT spoke to the people in ways that they would understand what they were saying.

- We must interpret the OT in light of the NT and we must realize that the "literal" reading is not always the biblical meaning.

- We must strive to understand the OT in light of the NT, something that Jesus and the apostles practiced and promoted.

Christotelic and Ecclesiotelic

- The aim of Israel's history was christotelic in nature.
- While there is a christotelic nature to the OT there is also an ecclesiotelic.
- Let us consider two examples to help us understand this point.

1.) Galatians 3:16-29

2.) Romans 15:1-4

- How the original recipients may have read these texts is inconsequential in the grand scheme of redemptive-history.
- The final authority on the OT is Jesus and his apostles.

How can we guard against misunderstanding our OT?

- We want to understand the progressive unfolding of the revelation of God in its unity and multiformity finding its consummation in the new covenant.
- We want to follow the contours and shape of biblical revelation so as to reproduce as far as possible the features of the progressive activity of God's gracious self-disclosure.

As we read Scripture we must recognize three key elements:

- Revelation involves historical progression.
- Revelation comes to us in various literary genres that must be taken seriously.

- Revelation comes to us in God's mighty deeds and his interpretation of those deeds.

As we read Scripture we must ask three interpretative questions:

- We must ask what is going on in this particular passage.
- We must understand where we are in the storyline of Scripture.
- We must understand this text in light of Christ and his church.

Conclusion

- Scripture for Jesus and the apostles was the Old Testament.
- The New Testament is nothing less than the commentary on the Old Testament.
- It is the hope of the OT authors that we come to learn how to appreciate the christotelic nature of the OT as they and the apostles did (1 Pet 1:10-12).
- Unless we understand Jesus we will never understand our Old Testament and unless we understand the Old Testament we will never understand the glorious realities that are ours in Christ as his church (Luke 24:13-49).

Key Events in the History of Israel

- We will look at a sweeping panoramic view of the OT.
- We will stop at various points along the plotline of the OT and look at key texts and events in Israel's history.
- As we move through the plotline of the OT we will see three key themes emerge: God's People, God's Place, and God's Rule.
- We will see that the substance of these categories change throughout redemptive-history.

Creation, Humanity, and Fall: Genesis 1-3

- Adam and the woman are to be God's people; they are to follow the divine imperative, which is "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen 1:28).
- Adam and the woman were to procreate and establish God's kingdom on earth.
- God comes into relationship (or covenant) with Adam and the woman.
- Part of their covenantal blessing is that God comes and walks among them (Gen 3:8).
- Adam and the woman have a direct communion with God in his temple-garden.
- An adversary (Satan) rises up and seeks to take the place of God, to establish his own kingdom and his own people.
- The first way Satan seeks to do this within human history is by deceiving Adam and the woman.
- Despite the apparent victory of Satan, God promises to bring about redemption (Gen 3:15).
- The seed of the woman will produce faith, but the seed of the serpent will produce unbelief.
- There will come a seed or offspring from the woman that will crush the serpent, but not without suffering, struggle, and affliction.
- What begins to take shape in human history is that faith in the promises of God is the way in which people stand in right relationship to him.
- Adam's first act of faith is by naming his wife Eve (Gen 3:20; cf., Gen 4:1).
- The first son to continue the seed promise is Abel.
- It is in the context of human history that God begins to bring about the redemption of humanity.

- God's revelation now becomes the interpreter of human history.

Righteous Noah: Genesis 6-9

- Prior to the story of Noah we see that the seed of the serpent increases and wickedness spreads throughout the earth (Gen 4:15-5:32).
- God will preserve the promise he made to Adam and Eve through a righteous man named Noah (Gen 6:8-9).
- God makes a covenant with Noah (8:20-9:17).
- Noah is given the same divine imperative as Adam, "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen 9:1).
- Noah becomes drunk and does not fulfill the divine imperative as he should.
- The nations will find their salvation in the "name" of God.
- It is now through the person of Shem that we find God begin to carry forward his plan of redemption.

The Tower of Babel: Genesis 11

- Humanity once again becomes desperately evil and now is going to create their own kingdom and rule in opposition to God's kingdom and rule.
- The way in which their pride is expressed is that they seek to make a "name" for themselves (Gen 11:4) in opposition to the name of God.
- The significance of this event is the birth of the nations.
- The nations will rise up under the dominion of Satan and seek to destroy the seed promise.

- Despite distortion of language and the scattering of humanity, God will continue his promise through Abraham.
- It will now be through one man and one nation that salvation will come to the families of the earth.

The Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph: Genesis 12-50

- God promises to Abraham three things:
 - 1.) Land (Gen 12:1)
 - 2.) Seed (a great nation, Gen 12:2)
 - 3.) Blessing (Gen 12:2)
- God comes into a unilateral covenant with Abraham (Gen 15:1-21).
- Abraham believes the promises of God and it is credited to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6).
- In Genesis 17:1-14 God confirms his covenant again with Abraham and gives him the sign of circumcision.
- In Genesis 22:1-19 Abraham's faith is tested and God delivers Isaac and by this reaffirms his covenant with Abraham.
- Abraham believes these promises, which means he believes in the final fulfillment of these promises no matter what form or shape they might take.
- God continues his covenant relationship through Isaac and Jacob (Gen 26:1-5; 28:10-14).
- God preserves the people through Joseph and the book ends with the offspring of Abraham as a great nation living in the land of Egypt.

- Jacob dies and he blesses Judah and declares that he will be a great ruler (Gen 49:8-10).
- The various events and struggles we find in the life of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph demonstrate for us the struggle they faced in following God and trusting in his promises.
- They came to realize that this life is not an end in itself, but a pilgrimage towards a future that God alone can construct for his people.
- The patriarchs knew that they were aliens and strangers in a foreign land and although they never received what was promised to them (at least in the ultimate sense) they all died in faith continuing to believe the promises of God.

Moses, the Exodus, and the Wilderness: Exodus-Deuteronomy

- God hears the cry of his people and sends them Moses as a deliverer.
- God reveals his name to Moses—I Am (Exo 3:1-22). He is a God who creates, who causes to be, and who brings into being what he wants.
- The history of Israel will now be about their covenant God in action.
- Since Pharaoh has oppressed Israel, God's firstborn son, God will smite all the firstborn of Egypt (Exo 4:21-23).
- God's calling of Israel as his firstborn son is significant in that they are to be known by his name (Exo 4:22-23; Deut 28:10).
- God delivers his people through the great event of the Exodus. The Exodus event is significant on a number of fronts.
 - 1.) It demonstrates God's great love for his people.
 - 2.) It becomes a symbol and pattern throughout the history of Israel.

- God continues to care and make provision for Israel in the wilderness.
- In the wilderness Israel faces great suffering, but also great blessing.

The Law, the Temple, and the Priestly Order: Exodus-Deuteronomy

- The Law is a covenant that God gives to the Israelites so that they might know how to obey and worship him. The essence or the supreme summation of the law is the Ten Commandments (Exo 20:1-17; Deut 5:1-21).
- The Mosaic covenant is a conditional covenant, which means if Israel obeys God he will bless them; however, if they disobey him he will judge them.
- God recounts what he has done for the Israelites and tells them three things they will be to him should they obey his voice.
 - 1.) His own treasured possession (Exo 19:5)
 - 2.) A kingdom of priests (Exo 19:6)
 - 3.) A holy nation (Exo 19:6)
- God reminds the Israelites that he did not have to choose them because the whole earth is his (Exo 19:5), but he chooses them anyway (Deut 4:20; 7:6; 6:6-11; 10:15).
- The law that God gives the Israelites is to encompass all aspects of their lives; their civil, social, moral, worship, and family life.
- The way in which Israel will approach her God will be through temple worship. God will dwell with his people by means of a tabernacle (Exo 25:8; 29:45).
- The Passover, along with the rest of the sacrificial offerings, demonstrates that death or payment is needed to appease God's wrath.
- The priest, his qualifications, his garments, and his activity are to reflect the Lord (holiness) and are symbolic of what he intends for all of his people if they obeyed his commandments (Exo 19:6).

- As the wilderness wanderings of the Israelites comes to an end, God reaffirms his covenant with them in the book of Deuteronomy.
- Moses speaks of a leader to come who will be like him (Deut 18:15-19).
- God speaks of a time when Israel will be scattered and held in captivity, but God will bring them back (Deut 30:1-5).
- God's promise includes that he will circumcise their hearts so that they will love the Lord with all their heart and with all their soul (Deut 30:6).

Conquest and Kingship: Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings

- God has fulfilled his promise to the Israelites, they have possessed the land (Josh 21:43-44; 23:1-16; cf., Josh 24:1-28).
- However, the nation of Israel did not completely smite those who live in the land. Several nations continue to exist in the land (Judg 1:27-36; cf., Josh 13:1-7).
- In the Psalms David records that the people who were part of the conquest never really entered God's rest (Psa 95:1-11).
- The cycle of sin, judgment, and deliverance continues in the history of Israel until the time of Samuel.
- Toward the end of Samuel's life the people of Israel demand a king like the other nations (1 Sam 8:1-9).
- For the Israelites to ask for a king is like them saying that they did not want God as their king (1 Sam 8:7).
- Their first king is Saul.
- The idea of kingship will now become very important in the history of Israel.
- The Lord takes Saul's kingship from him and gives it to David.
- David moves the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and intends to make it the capital of Israel, which, in the Psalms and prophets, becomes known as Zion (2 Sam 6:1-23).

- Zion will become synonymous with God's rule and people. David also plans to build a temple (2 Sam 7:1-7).
- David wants to build a house for the Lord, but God tells David that he will build a house (or kingdom) for him instead.
- The promise given to David is that his house and kingdom shall endure forever and his throne shall be established forever (2 Sam 7:16).
- God promises four things to David and his descendant.
 - 1.) This king will secure a permanent place for God's people (2 Sam 7:9-11)
 - 2.) This king will establish a kingdom forever (2 Sam 7:12-13).
 - 3.) This king will build a house for the Lord's name sake (2 Sam 7:13)
 - 4.) This king will be a son of God and His lovingkindness will be with him forever (2 Sam 7:15).
- The Davidic covenant is an essential event for two reasons.
 - 1.) It recalls the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
 - 2.) The designation of sonship is now transformed to include the king.
- In response David offers a prayer of thanksgiving (2 Sam 7:18-29).
- David appoints his son Solomon as his successor.
- The Abrahamic promises have reached their fulfillment.
- David and Solomon are the ideal kings in Israel's history, because they were kings who obeyed God from the heart (David, 1 Sam 13:14) and sought to be wisdom for God (Solomon; 1 Kings 3:6-15).
- The wisdom literature is filled with praises to God for his faithfulness and how a true and faithful son (king) is to live before God.
- Solomon builds a great temple for the Lord (1 Kings 6:1-38).
- Solomon, in accordance with the promise given to Abraham, even becomes a blessing to the rest of the world through his encounter with the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1-29).
- Despite the glory of David and Solomon's reigns they are not the forever king, nor is their kingdom the forever kingdom God has promised.

- The kingdom is split at the death of Solomon. The southern kingdom is called Judah, consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and the northern kingdom is called Israel, consisting of the other ten tribes.
- None of the kings nor their kingdoms are the promised forever king or kingdom; thus, the promises given to Abraham, though fulfilled in an immediate sense, still remained unfulfilled.
- The message of the prophets is that God will still remain faithful to his promises, but not before terrible judgment for their sins. In order to bring about his promises, God will enact a new covenant in the future, unlike the old covenant.

The Message of the Pre-Exilic Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea-Zephaniah

- As Israel and Judah continue to decline in sin, God raises up prophets to rebuke the nation and their kings for their disobedience.
- The message of the prophets is one of judgment, but also one of restoration.
- While prophets existed before the writing prophets, it is in the writing prophets that we receive a detailed picture of God's judgment and restoration of Israel.
- The words of the prophets are framed in the language of the people so that they can relate and understand what God is doing.
- In other words, the prophets recapitulate (re-tell) the history of Israel as a means to convey the promise of the future in terms they can understand and relate to, and speak about a better exodus, a better king, a better covenant, and a better kingdom.
- There are two types of language the prophet's use.
 - 1.) Prophetic: The message of prophecy is that the nation is to return and remember their origins, but move on.
 - 2.) Apocalyptic: The message of the prophets also includes apocalyptic language. This language is especially characteristic of the promises of restoration. The prophets understand that while there is to be a remembrance of the past, a whole new creation or covenant is needed.
- In regard to Israel's restoration the prophets begin to emphasize a new king, a new creation, a new covenant, and a new people.
- The prophets understand that God's work for Israel in the future will be a fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham, David, and the nation as a whole.

- The message of the pre-exilic prophets is a message of hope despite impending judgment.
- These prophets include: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah (and Jonah and Nahum to the Assyrians and Obadiah to the Edomites).
- Despite the judgment that God was preparing to bring through the Assyrians and Babylonians it is within the context of God's great acts in the past for Israel that become the hope for his restoration of Israel in the future.
- God will act once again for them and bring them back to the land.

Isaiah

- In the early chapters of Isaiah, the prophet promises that despite Israel's sin God will raise up a branch from the root of Jesse that will bring about justice and righteousness (Isa 9:1-7; 11:1-10).
 - 1.) God will fulfill his promises to David (cf., Isa 22:20-25).
 - 2.) Within the context of this kingship will be a restoration of God's people (Isa 11:11-16).
 - 3.) He will gather for himself a remnant from all over the world (Isa 2:3; 14:1; 18:7; 24:14-16; 25:6-8; cf., 46:3-4).
- We receive further insight into this One to come in Isaiah chapters 40-66.
 - 1.) God is high and lifted up as the king of Israel (Isa 41:21; 43:14-15; 44:6; 66:1).
 - 2.) What is important to recognize in these chapters is that God speaks to both the nation and to his chosen servant (Isa 41:8-9; 44:1-2, 21; 45:4; 42:1-7; 49:3; 50:6; 53:1ff).
 - 3.) A re-gathering or restoration of God's people (Isa 43:6-7; cf., Isa 45:14; 46:3-4; 49:23; 60:4).
 - 4.) God will pour out his Spirit on his restored people (Isa 44:3; 53:10; 59:21; cf., Isa 55:1; 58:11; 61:6; 66:21).
 - 5.) Part of God's restoration is to bring others or outsiders into his kingdom (Isa 50:3, 5; 42:6; 49:6; 55:5; 56:3-8; 60:3, 10; 65:1-2, 23; 66:19-21).
 - 6.) Restoration is not merely a return to former things, but a new cosmic creation (Isa 25:6-12; 60:19-20; 65:17-18; 21, 25; 66:22-23; cf., Isa 11:6-9; 30:26).

Jeremiah

- Jeremiah laments at the prospect of exile; however, despite impending judgment there are key themes of restoration that Jeremiah writes about that are essential to redemptive-history.
 - 1.) The Ark of the Covenant, which was the symbol of God's covenant relationship with Israel would one day be trivial (Jer 3:15-23; cf., Jer 6:16; 16:14-15).
 - 2.) God will raise up a righteous king, in contrast to the unrighteous kings of Jeremiah's time (Jer 23:1-8).
 - 3.) The preeminent text found in Jeremiah is in 31:31-34.
 - a.) He will put his law on their hearts.
 - b.) He will be there God.
 - c.) They will all know him from the least of them to the greatest of them.
 - d.) He will forgive their iniquity and remember their sins no more.
- This new covenant that God will make with the house of Israel will receive further development in the book of Ezekiel.

Hosea, Joel, and Amos

- Joel, Hosea, and Amos are three pre-exilic prophets that speak of God's judgment, but all three offer important themes to the restoration of Israel. Here are some of the key themes.
 - 1.) Hosea is instructed to take a bride.
 - a.) Though he has called them Lo-ammi (not people), he will call them his people once again (Hos 1:9-11; 2:14-23; cf., Deut 32:21).
 - b.) He will perform a second exodus (Hos 11:1-11; 13:14ff; 14:1-9).
 - 2.) Joel envisions a day when God will bring judgment.
 - a.) God will come at an appointed time to rescue Israel.
 - b.) Once God has delivered his people he will pour out his Spirit on the sons and daughters of Israel (Joel 2:28-32).

c.) He will also pour out his Spirit on all mankind. Again, we see the universal nature of God's restoration.

d.) In turn he will judge the nations and the new age will be characterized by abundance and newness (Joel 2:18-21).

3.) Amos comes to judge the sin of Israel, particularly their hypocrisy, idolatry, and injustice. It is only at the end of Amos that we find hope and restoration. It is in the context of the covenant with David that God will bring restoration (Amos 9:11-15). God promises three things.

a.) He will rebuild the house of David (Amos 9:11).

b.) He will save the Edomites, Israel's traditional enemies (Amos 9:12).

c.) He will bring about newness to the land (Amos 9:13-15).

- Hosea, Joel, and Amos offer vivid pictures of God's future plans for Israel. We see that God will establish his kingdom (Amos), he will secure his people and save them (Hosea), and the identifying mark of God's promise of restoration and presence with them is by his Spirit (Joel).

Micah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah

- Relatively speaking Micah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah are not quite as long or as detailed as Hosea, Joel, and Amos, but they too offer a message of restoration in light of God's coming judgment.

1.) Micah addresses Israel's injustice much like Amos.

a.) Micah highlights that after the exile a remnant of God's people shall return (Micah 2:12; 4:7; 5:7-8; 7:18).

b.) The remnant will flourish and multiply as they will reign with their God (Micah 7:7-20).

c.) As the kingdom is restored, so is the king. The king to come will be like David. As David's birthplace was Bethlehem, so this future king will come from Bethlehem, even though his origins have been from all of eternity (Micah 2:13; 4:8; 5:2-4).

2.) Habakkuk speaks of the judgment that God will send upon his people; however, the prophet knows that those who trust in the covenant promises of God will live and that life is only achieved by faith.

a.) God will deliver his people as a warrior who will destroy their enemies and cause his people to walk on high places (Hab 3:16-19).

b.) Only those who trust him by faith will be justified and restored (Hab 2:1-4).

3.) Zephaniah vividly portrays God's judgment on his people.

a.) His prophecies are not just local in their focus, but also cosmic (Zep 1:18; 3:8).

b.) Zephaniah sees a day when God will gather his remnant along with those beyond the borders of Israel (Zep 3:8-20).

- We see especially that God will fulfill the promises given to David (Micah), by bringing a future king from the birth place of David. We see that those who will be saved are those who trust God in by faith. In other words, the existence of and future presence of faith in the life of Israel is an indication that God is going to and has restored his people (Habakkuk). Finally, we see that God's judgment and salvation is not only localized to Israel, but is cosmic in its final form (Zephaniah).
- The exilic prophets will continue these themes of judgment and restoration, but they will offer new perspectives of how God will accomplish this task.

The Message of the Exilic Prophets: Ezekiel and Daniel

- The great theme of the exilic prophets is that God has not forgotten his covenant with their fathers despite exile, but will bring about restoration at the appointed time.
- Moreover, the restoration will far exceed what the Israelites were given in the past (e.g., temple, glory of God, rule, etc.).
- Despite the apparent authority that other nations possess, God promises that he will in fact restore his people, bring about his kingdom, and crush all other global powers.
- One day, Israel will be restored and exalted and the glory of the Lord will return to his people.

Ezekiel

- Ezekiel primarily speaks about the glory of the Lord leaving his people.
- For the temple to be destroyed and Jerusalem being sacked meant the glory of the Lord was departing.
- Just as much as the glory of the Lord is a major theme in Ezekiel, so is the return of himself and his glory.

- There are three major themes that surround this idea of God's glory we find in the book.

1.) God will be a shepherd to them and Israel will be a branch in which every kind of bird will find nesting, and he will appoint his servant David to care for them (Ezek 17:22-24; 34:11- 31).

2.) God will enact a new covenant and restore the people (Ezek 36:22-38; 37:1-28; 38:1-39:29).

a.) The restoration of God's people will be characterized by the giving of the Spirit (Ezek 36:26-27; 37:14; 39:29; cf., 11:19).

b.) God will reunite Israel and Judah as one (Ezek 37:15-23).

c.) With the restoration of God's people and the giving of the Spirit will come the establishment of David's throne forever (Ezek 37:24-28).

d.) God will set his sanctuary in their midst and will dwell with them forever (Ezek 37:24-28).

e.) God will destroy his enemies as characterized by Gog and the land of Magog (Ezek 38:1-39:29).

3.) God will rebuild the temple and his glory will return. The temple represents several things (Ezek 40-48; cf., 28:13; 31:8).

a.) It represents God's presence with his people, but this time it will be with all people, not merely in the holy of holies (Ezek 43:2-7; 44:4; 48:35).

b.) It represents life from God (Ezek 47:1-12).

- God will perform another exodus. He will bring them from a foreign land, he will give them a new covenant, and he will dwell with them.

Daniel

- The book of Daniel is predominately about God's sovereign rule over the nations and his establishment of his forever king and kingdom.

- In Daniel two, seven, and nine we find a symbolic representation of the world's superpowers and their eventual demise to one final king and kingdom.

1.) The Image (Dan 2:31-45).

2.) The Beasts (Dan 7:1-14).

3.) The Messiah (Dan 9:24-27).

- Daniel 9:24-27 is divided up into four sections.

- 1.) Daniel 9:24: An overview of the entire period (70 weeks)

- 2.) Daniel 9:25: A division of the 69 sevens

- 3.) Daniel 9:26: A description of the final seven in indefinite terms

- 4.) Daniel 9:27: A description of the final seven in more definite terms

- Several things will take place at the end of the seventy weeks.

- 1.) Finish transgression

- 2.) Make an end to sin

- 3.) Make atonement for iniquity

- 4.) Bring in everlasting righteousness

- 5.) Seal up the vision and prophecy

- 6.) Anoint the most holy

- For Daniel the end of the 70 years of captivity is the end of exile, but an introduction to a new exile, an exile which will only end with the coming of God's anointed.

- God, in this passage, is not trying to convey a strict literal time pattern, but a theological and redemptive point that the end of all things comes with his anointed one.

- As the Israelites are preparing to return to the land, God reminds them that he is in control and is going to establish his forever king and kingdom.

- He assures them that despite the various nations that will rise up, his plans will not be disturbed.

Second Temple Judaism: Ezra, Nehemiah, 1-2 Chronicles

- Under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah the temple and walls are rebuilt.

- Chronicles records the history of David, Solomon, and their successor kings. Though it is like 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings it is unique in that it emphasizes two things.

- 1.) It emphasizes the Davidic line in a favorable light.

- 2.) It is the last book in the Hebrew canon.

- Despite the faith of men such as Ezra and Nehemiah, there remains vast unbelief among the people.
- God performs another exodus for the people and Ezra stands as their second Moses.
- God brings them from a strange land and gives them a temple so that he might dwell with them; however, there is not a new covenant and many of them long for the glory of Solomon's temple (Ezra 3:8-13).
- Despite God's goodness to bring the people back to the land of their fathers, the promises remain unfulfilled in the final and ultimate sense.
- The magnificent promises of restoration never seem to reach their fulfillment even after the return from Babylon.
- The message of the post-exilic prophets is so essential, because they not only encourage the people, but remind the people that God has not forgotten them and that the work they are doing is not in vain, but anticipates a final fulfillment.

The Message of the Post-Exilic Prophets: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

- The final three prophets found in Scripture remind the people of God's precious promises. Moreover, they emphasize the rebuilding of the temple, faithfulness to God, and anticipation of his coming.
- It would take a new temple and a new covenant to change the hearts of the people some four-hundred years later.

Haggai and Zechariah

- Haggai and Zechariah are sent to encourage the builders of the temple.
- The message of Haggai and Zechariah are very similar; however, while Haggai is rather straight forward, Zechariah takes his message to a deeper and more profound level; a level that is given in visions and symbols (1-8 visions; 9-14 explanation or recapitulation of visions).
- There are four central themes that flow from Haggai and Zechariah.

1.) God will rebuild Jerusalem and his temple. This city and temple is a future reality that only God can build and protect (Hagg 2:6-9; cf., Zech 2:4-5).

2.) God will return and live with his people. For both Haggai and Zechariah the way in which God will return and dwell with his people is by his Spirit (Zech 4:6; 12:10-12; 14:20-21).

3.) God will continue to bring his people back. Even though the exiles have returned to the land of Canaan, there is coming a time when God will call more of his people from exiled countries (Zech 2:6-7; 8:7-8; 10:10).

4.) Sin will be removed in God's future city and temple and God's priestly-king will come. Zerubbabel and Joshua are the two important figures in the books of Haggai and Zechariah (Hagg 2:20-23; Zech 3:8-10; 4:8-14; 6:11-15; 9:9-10; 13:7).

Malachi

- Despite God's return of his people to the land, their hearts remain unchanged and their deeds are wicked. However, God does not forget the promise he made to them.
- God will come to them on his appointed day (i.e., Day of the Lord). On that day he will send judgment, purification, and renewal.
- He will send a messenger before him and the mark of this time will be the coming of Elijah and he will call the people back to the Lord (Mal 3:1-4; 4:1-6; cf., Isa 40:1-5).
- One will come who is like Elijah in mind and spirit (so too with David in regard to the anointed one).
- Again, the promises of the future are framed in ways that the people can understand (e.g., Elijah), but it is not until the NT that the people are able to fully appreciate what these promises meant.
- After almost 400 years of silence from God, it is in light of Jesus that the OT comes to fruition and clarity. God will restore his people and fulfill his promises in his anointed one—Jesus.

Inter-Testamental Era

- During the inter-testamental period which lasts from approximately 450 BC to 3 BC major events take place that will prepare the world for God's coming.
- The Jewish people still anticipate God's kingdom; however, different groups within Israelite culture begins to emerge and have differing views on the kingdom.

- Moreover, during the inter-testamental period pagan influence begins to grow in Israel, Jewish compromise is rising, and pagan oppression begins to be widespread, which influences the way many Jews view the coming kingdom.
- The kingdom takes on a nationalistic flavor that will crush pagan influence and restore Israelite glory.
- There are several key points to highlight from the inter-testamental period.
 - 1.) During this time Alexander the Great conquers (331-323 BC) the Persians (until 331 BC) and the whole known world and eventually dies.
 - 2.) During this time the Jewish family Maccabees establishes the Hasmonean dynasty.
 - 3.) Synagogues begin to be built and four major groups of Jews develop and have their own way of understanding the kingdom of God: Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots, and Essenes.
 - 4.) Rome rises in power (63 BC) and takes over the world. Herod the Great (The Herod at the birth of Jesus) is appointed to rule over Israel by the Romans.
- The time is fulfilled: God is ready to send the promised seed. God is the Lord of history and despite 400 Years of silence God will still keep his promises.

II. The New Testament

- God always had a plan for creation, to be king and to establish his kingdom.
- The essence of the kingdom is God's power through Christ and by his Spirit to restore creation (especially humanity) to live under his rule.
- God's plan has reached its climax and destiny in the person and work of Jesus Christ, who has first place in all things and is the head of the body, the church (Col 1:18-20).
- I think there are three things we need to keep in mind as we approach the NT after looking at the OT.
 - 1.) Jesus and the Apostles are the final interpreters of OT Scripture (Heb 1:1-3; cf., Acts 2:42).
 - 2.) Because the OT must be interpreted in light of the NT, many things from the OT do not apply to us, but find their meaning, significance, and end as we read them in light of Jesus (Matt 5:17-20).

3.) Most people in churches today speak better than they know (John 11:45-53).

- At this point some might say that we are simply “spiritualizing” the text; however, a few comments should be made in response.

1.) If we are accused for spiritualizing the text, then Jesus and the apostles were guilty of the exact same offense.

2.) Is not Jesus’ kingdom spiritual, rather than physical?

3.) It is not so much that Christ fulfills what the OT means; rather, Christ is the meaning for which everything in the OT existed.

A. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ (The Gospels)

- We will highlight various aspects of the life of Christ that specifically relate to the OT and its promises.
- Though the phrase “kingdom of God” is not prevalent in the OT (Dan 7:14, 27) the idea was. The OT writers and prophets anticipated a time when God would bring his king and kingdom and restore to Israel her fortunes and execute judgment on her behalf.

1.) The announcement and birth of Jesus (Matt 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-56; 2:1-38; John 1:1-5, 14-18).

The angel not only reveals how this miracle will take place, but reveals that Jesus is the fulfillment of the promises that Israel hoped for.

a.) He will be Son of the most High (Luke 1:32)

b.) He will receive the throne of his father David (Luke 1:32)

c.) He will reign over the house of Jacob (Luke 1:33)

d.) His kingdom will have no end (Luke 1:33)

e.) He is the Holy one of God, the Son of God (Luke 1:35)

Furthermore, in Matthew 1:18-25 we gain further insight into the birth of Jesus and its significance in light of the OT. The coming of Jesus is two-fold.

a.) He will take away the sins of the people (Matt 1:21)

b.) His birth will mean God is with us (Matt 1:23)

2.) The genealogies of Jesus (Matt 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38).

3.) Jesus coming out of Egypt, his baptism, temptation, and the beginning of his ministry (Matt 2:13-23; 3:13-4:17; Mark 1:9-15; Luke 3:21-4:13).

4.) The Kingdom of God.

What we find in Jesus' teaching on the kingdom are five key themes.

a.) Jesus uses parables to speak about the kingdom.

b.) Through Jesus, his followers would call God "Father" (Matt 5:48; Luke 6:36; 8:21).

c.) The preeminent mark that God's rule had come to be with his people is the presence of the Spirit (John 3:1-21).

d.) Jesus' followers were to deny themselves and follow him (Matt 10:38-40; 16:24-26; Mark 8:34-37; Luke 9:23-25).

e.) Jesus is the new lawgiver (Matt 5:1-7:29).

5.) John the Baptist (Matt 3:1-12; 11:1-19; 17:1-13; Mark 1:1-8; Luke 3:1-17; John 1:19-34).

a.) The disciples ask if in fact Elijah must come first before the Lord's anointed (Matt 17:10).

b.) Jesus states that Elijah will come and restore all things (Matt 17:11). In other words, the scribes have taught you correctly.

c.) However, know and recognize that Elijah has already come and the scribes did not recognize him, but killed him, just as they will kill the Son of Man (Matt 17:12).

d.) Thus, three disciples understood that John was the messenger sent in the spirit of Elijah (Matt 17:13).

6.) Choosing of the twelve (Matt 4:18-22; Matt 10:1-15; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:13-16; John 1:35-51).

7.) Jesus the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

a.) Jesus is the Son of David (Matt 11:28-12:8; 22:41-46).

b.) Jesus is the Ladder from Heaven (John 1:35-51).

c.) Jesus is the true temple (John 1:11-14; 2:13-25; 4:7-29; Matt 21:42; 26:61; Mark 12:10; 14:58; Luke 20:17; cf., Col 1:19; 2:9; Heb 1:1-3).

d.) Jesus is the faithful shepherd (John 10:1-21; Psa 23:1ff).

e.) Jesus is greater than Moses (John 5:39-47).

f.) Jesus is greater than Abraham (John 8:31-59).

g.) Jesus is greater than Solomon (Matt 12:38-45).

h.) Jesus is the true vine (John 15:1-11; cf., Matt 21:43; Mark 12:9; Luke 20:16).

8.) The miracles of Jesus (Mark 4:35-5:43; John 2:1-12; 6:1-71; 9:1-34; 11:1-46).

a.) Jesus calms the storms and the seas, cures the demon possessed man, and heals the sick (Mark 4:35-5:43).

b.) Jesus turns water into wine (John 2:1-12).

c.) Jesus feeds the 5000 (John 6:1-71).

d.) Jesus heals the blind man (John 9:1-34).

e.) Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-46).

9.) His death, burial, resurrection, and post-resurrection appearances.

Sin had to be dealt with if people were going share in the presence of God and receive his promises.

As Jesus hung on the cross he bore the full wrath of God and completed the necessary atonement for salvation (John 19:30).

Jesus before he ascended to the Father blessed his disciples (Luke 24:50-53).

- Jesus would establish his kingdom through his disciples and four things become apparent of how and what this would look like.

a.) His presence would be with them by the Spirit (Matt 28:20).

b.) His disciples would proclaim that Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT (Luke 24:44-49).

c.) The disciples would be given the life of Christ in their ministry (John 15:5-15).

d.) The apostles were chosen by Jesus to begin this new humanity called the church (Matt 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:19-23).

- Jesus not only fulfilled the OT, but Jesus as we will see in the book of Acts and Epistles continues to stand at the center of God's purposes of restoration for humanity and creation.

B. The Beginning of the Church (The Book of Acts)

- With God's purposes finding their meaning and fulfillment in Jesus the singular point in which human history finds its summing up now begins to expand past national and ethnic borders throughout all of humanity and the universe.
- In the book of Acts (and especially the epistles) we find the explanation of God's greatest act in human history—the coming of Jesus and his work on the cross, which fulfills and transforms the promises given in the OT.
- The apostles ask when God will restore the kingdom to Israel. Jesus, in answering their question, corrects their view.
 - 1.) He states that it is not for them to know the times or the epochs which the Father has fixed by his own authority (Acts 1:6).
 - 2.) He states that they will be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and even to the remotest parts of the earth (Acts 1:8).
- With the outpouring of the Spirit Peter announces that this is in accordance with the prophecy of Joel that would take place in the last days (Acts 2:17). With the coming of the Spirit a new era has dawned.
- There are four key themes of the blessings of the Spirit and how they manifest themselves among the people of God that we see unfold in the book of Acts (and the Epistles).
 - a.) The Spirit will create a new work, which is a new people of God.
 - b.) God will dwell with his people by the Spirit as he had promised in the OT.
 - c.) The Spirit will bring unity to God's people and give to the people necessary gifts to carry out the work of the kingdom.
 - d.) The Spirit's permanence and presence will be with and in all people, regardless of sex, ethnicity, and social or political status.
- In the early chapters of Acts we see the work of the Spirit as the apostles carry forth the message of the kingdom. In the early parts of Acts three things become clear (Acts 1-7).

a.) The apostles understand Jesus to be the promised son of David, the fulfillment of the OT, the holy one of God, the heir to David's throne and, with his accession is installed as God's king to rule his kingdom (Acts 2:29-36; 3:11-26; 10:43; 15:16ff; cf., Rom 15:12; 1 Cor 15:24; Eph 1:21; Phil 2:5-11; Col 2:10).

b.) As humanity had been scattered throughout the world at Babel (Gen 11), so now God was re-gathering the nations to himself by virtue of the Spirit (Acts 2:5)

c.) There is a practical reality to their kingdom message in the life of the early church (Acts 2:43-47; 4:32-37; 6:1-7).

- In Acts chapter seven we have one of the most significant events in the life of the early church.
- Stephen's speech highlights the theology of the early church in light of the coming of Jesus and can be summed up as is follows.

a.) God had a plan from the very beginning when he called Abraham out of his land and was with him (Acts 7:1-16).

b.) God was with his people and preserved and blessed them in a foreign land and raised up Moses to lead them out of bondage (Acts 7:17-36).

c.) God gave the Jews the Law and Moses spoke of another prophet that they were to listen to (Acts 7:37-38).

d.) Our fathers rebelled against God's messenger, Moses, and angered the Lord (Acts 7:39-43).

e.) God dwelt with the people in a tabernacle and he went with them into the land (Acts 7:44-45).

f.) In the land David wanted to build a temple for God, but it was Solomon who built a house for the Lord (Acts 7:46-47).

g.) However, the prophets agree that God does not live in temples made by human hands, but heaven is his throne and earth is his footstool, what kind of house will you build for me (Acts 7:49-50)?

- Upon completing his sermons Stephen answers their accusations and clarifies their misinterpretation (Acts 7:51-53).
 - a.) If you believed Moses, you would have believed in the one he spoke about—Jesus.
 - b.) Do you not understand that God does not dwell in stone structures, but dwells with his people (e.g. Acts 7:14-5, 7; John 4:23-24)?
 - c.) God’s presence is not confined to the law, or a piece of land, or a temple, but is offered by faith through Jesus by the filling of the Spirit, which is now offered to all nations.

- We see the worldwide expansion of God’s kingdom promises in the next few chapters of Acts, which the stoning of Stephen opens up (Acts 8:12).

- God’s redemption is reaching all people of the earth, which find their origin in a second Adam—Noah.
 - 1.) Shem (Jews such as Peter and Paul).
 - 2.) Ham (The Ethiopian Eunuch; Acts 8:25-40; cf., Deut 23:1).
 - 3.) Japheth (Cornelius the centurion; Acts 10:34-48).

- The rest of Acts is about God’s missionary efforts through Paul’s ministry. From the ministry of Paul there are few things to consider.
 - 1.) Paul’s teaching always reflected a redemptive understanding of human history that found its summation in Jesus Christ and his kingdom (Acts 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 24:14; 26:22; 28:23, 31; cf., 1 Cor 2:2; 2 Cor 1:20).
 - 2.) Paul’s teaching even reflected redemptive history when talking to pagan Gentiles (Acts 17:22-34).

- The early Christians wrestled with the relationship between the Jew and Gentile. If God had dealt with Israel all these years, was it not necessary for Gentiles to take upon themselves the laws and customs of Moses?

- The early church settled this issue in Acts 15:1-21.

- Quoting from Amos 9:11-15 James states two important things.
 - a.) The tabernacle or house of David is being rebuilt by Christ (Acts 15:16).
 - b.) The rebuilding of this house includes Gentiles (Acts 15:17-18).
- The book of Acts ends abruptly, with Paul awaiting to take the gospel to Caesar. Why does the book end in this way?

C. The People of God (The Epistles)

- The Epistles build on the message of Jesus and explain what has taken place with his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.
- To begin our understanding of the church in the NT as the recipient of all the promises given to Israel, we should examine Paul's language of the saints in two of his earliest letters: 1-2 Thessalonians.
 - 1.) Gentiles are called the beloved of God (1 Thess 1:4; 2:12; 2 Thess 1:1; 2:13-14).
 - 2.) Gentiles are the "called-out" ones of God (1 Thess 2:12; 4:7; 5:24; 2 Thess 1:11; 2:14).
 - 3.) Gentiles are the saints or sanctified ones of God (1 Thess 4:1-8; 5:23-24; 2 Thess 2:13-14).
 - 4.) Gentiles are the people of the Spirit (1 Thess 1:5-6; 4:8).
- Gentiles are now elevated to the same status promised to Jews in the OT.
- What we also find is that non-believing Jews find themselves outside of the covenant promises of God (cf., Rom 9:6-8; Gal 4:24-25; 1 Thess 2:15-16).

1.) A New Humanity

- Jesus as the suffering servant has brought about a new humanity.
- In Philippians 2:5-11 we see Jesus clothe himself with humanity.
- With the coming of Jesus the nations of the world are no longer in darkness (Matt 4:16; Acts 26:18; Col 1:13); Jesus has come and defeated the power and works of the devil over the nations (1 John 3:8).

- God is now restoring humanity to himself and is accomplishing his plan of being king over his kingdom of people.
- The final realization of this new humanity is when Jesus returns and all those who trust in him are resurrected as a new humanity to be with God forever (1 Cor 15:1ff; cf., Isa 53:10).
- In the NT we see many key passages that talk about God's new people, people characterized by the Spirit of God, and people participating in and reflecting the new covenant / creation (Eph 4-6; Col 3-4): Ephesians 2:11-3:12; Hebrews 2:5-18; 8:7-13; Galatians 3:6-29; 4:21-31; 6:15-16; Romans 9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:1-58.

Ephesians 2:11-3:12

- Here Paul makes a clear case to demonstrate the unity of both Jews and Gentiles in Christ. Paul's argument is as follows:

1.) God's purposes go back before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:1-23).

a.) God has given to the Gentiles every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places and choose them from the foundation of the world (Eph 1:3-4).

b.) He has adopted the Gentiles as sons and has freely given us his grace and redemption in his Son—the Beloved (Eph 1:5-8).

c.) God has made known to us the mystery of his will, which is the summing up all things in Jesus (Eph 1:9-10), of which he predestined us to be a part of.

d.) Paul ends with a prayer for the saints, namely that they would understand this salvation found in Jesus and the supremacy of Christ in all things (Eph 1:11-23).

2.) God's salvation manifested in human history is achieved by grace through faith (Eph 2:1-11).

3.) Paul reminds the Ephesians what they were prior to God's grace and what they now have become because of Jesus (Ephesians 2:11-22).

a.) You were called the uncircumcision by the so-called circumcision (Eph 2:11).

b.) You were separated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenant promises (Eph 2:12).

c.) You had no hope without God in the world (Eph 2:12).

How did God bring about your inclusion into the kingdom of God and give to you the promises that were originally only promised to Israel?

- a.) Through Jesus Christ God has made one new man—a new humanity (Eph 2:13-15).
 - b.) Jesus not only made one new man, but abolished the law that was hostile to both Jews and Gentiles in terms of their relationship to each other and to God (Eph 2:16; cf., Col 1:22; 2:11-12).
 - c.) Jesus in making this one new man reconciled this man to God (Eph 2:16-17; cf., Isa 57:19).
 - d.) He has given us both the Spirit, which allows us to have access to the same Father as sons and daughters (Eph 2:18; cf., Rom 9:4).
 - e.) We are both fellow citizens and we both comprise the household of God—his temple, founded upon Jesus and the apostles and prophets (Eph 2:19-22).
- 4.) Paul was given this message of grace and good news to the Gentiles (Eph 3:1-21). What is this message?
- a.) Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel (Eph 3:6).
 - b.) This message is commissioned to Paul to bring about the plan of God's purposes, which is the inclusion of the Gentiles in Christ (Eph 3:7-10).
 - c.) This message was always part of God's eternal purpose and as Christ is the fulfillment of the OT, so this plan has always been the intended plan of God from eternity (Eph 3:11-12).
- Paul closes with a prayer that the Gentiles might understand the grace of God in Christ Jesus and what he has done for them (Eph 3:13-21).

Hebrews 2:5-18

- Psalm 8:4-6 is a Psalm about God's greatness and man's finiteness; but also exaltation as the greatest of God's creation.
- Sin has left man with an incomplete and marred dominion.
- How can we be sure that all things will be in subjection to him?
- While we do not see things subjected to man, we see Jesus, the true man.
- The perfection of the Son's sacrifice and his lasting rule guarantee the fulfillment of the destiny of mankind in him. While man has failed, Jesus has not.

- Psalm 8 is about Christ—as the true man—the man par excellence. How can he ensure these things—because he tasted death for all of us.
- He has brought many sons to glory by virtue of his suffering, death, and exaltation.
- The doctrine of adoption is implied in this verse. We are now adopted by God because of the work of Christ (Rom 8:15-17; Gal 4:5-7) and seated with him in the heavenly places (Col 3:1ff; Eph 2:6).
- Thus, through the second Adam we have been made sons of glory, brothers of Jesus, children of God, and Abraham’s seed.
- We are God’s people. Two OT quotations are used to support this idea.

1.) Psalm 22:22.

2.) Isaiah 8:17-18.

- Our salvation rests not solely on his identification with us, but more precisely on the redemption, which the incarnation enabled him to achieve at the cross.
- The purpose of the incarnation is to accomplish redemption, namely to render powerless him who had the power of death, the devil.
- It is by his likeness with humanity, a necessary likeness, by which he has become a great high priest.
- He has become a merciful and faithful high priest by virtue of propitiation or atonement.
- Jesus has been given, because of his death, glory and honor such as God has always intended for the whole human race (Col 3:10-11).
- Jesus as our great high priest acknowledges us as members of his family and, thus, of God’s new humanity.

1 Corinthians 15:1-58

- Christ inaugurated a new age and created a new humanity. The promise given to this new humanity is the resurrection.
- The NT outlines some important themes about the resurrection.
 - 1.) Baptism is important because it displays outwardly the reality of resurrection, not only at our conversion, but also in the future (Rom 6:5; cf., 1 Pet 3:21).

- 2.) Jesus' resurrection is a powerful reality in the life of the believer, namely to resist sin (Phil 3:10).
 - 3.) The resurrection is a goal of the believer and a source of great hope (Phil 3:11; 1 Pet 1:3).
 - 4.) There is a resurrection unto life with God, or unto death and suffering (Rev 20:5-6ff).
 - 5.) The principle passage that discusses the resurrection is 1 Corinthians 15:12-58.
- Paul outlines in 1 Corinthians 15:1-58 the importance of the resurrection and its implications for God's new humanity.
 - 1.) Paul states that the resurrection is essential to the Christian faith (1 Cor 15:1-11).
 - 2.) Paul states that because Christ has been raised from the dead, no one can claim there is no resurrection of the dead (1 Cor 15:12-19).
 - 3.) Paul shows that through Adam all died, but through Christ all live (1 Cor 20-28).
 - 4.) Paul uses several arguments to affirm the reality and truth of resurrection (1 Cor 15:29-41).
 - a.) Paul asks, why baptize on behalf of dead bodies (1 Cor 15:29)?
 - b.) Paul states that if the resurrection was not true, why then does he suffer (1 Cor 15:30-34)?
 - c.) Finally, Paul states that everything has its own order (1 Cor 15:35-49).
 - 5.) Paul gives us assurance of our victory and hope as God's new humanity (1 Cor 15:50-57).
 - Jesus rose from the dead as the second Adam and has been fruitful and multiplied his people through the Spirit and created a new people—the church.
 - As his new humanity our hope is the resurrection from the dead and life eternal with our God, as our king, in his kingdom for all of eternity.

2.) New Creatures

- While we exist in the old age, the new age has come and with it a new creation (2 Cor 3:1-4:6; 5:17-18).

- Because the people of God are new creatures they can overcome temptation and sin by the Spirit.
- Paul's argument in Romans 5:12-6:23 is crucial to understanding what we are as the people of God and how we are to live in the present evil age.

1.) Before Christ came we were always subject to sin, because of the sin of one man, Adam, which leads to death. However, by the obedience of one man, Jesus, all live to righteousness and have victory of sin (Rom 5:12-21)

2.) Now that sin has been defeated in Christ and now that we have been baptized with him and are dead to sin, we have the power to resist sin and should do so (Rom 6:1-11).

3.) Therefore, sin is not to be master over you. A new age has dawned with the coming of Christ that frees us from the slavery of sin to be a slave to God (Rom 6:12-23).

- Paul teaches that while we live in the present world there is a struggle between flesh and Spirit.
- Paul is not stating that we have two-natures in us warring over our soul, but that because we still live in an earthly body we are tempted to sin.
- We are new creatures, people possessed by God, and baptized in the Spirit.
- Paul urges us as the people of God that there is no reason why we should be subject to the flesh, for it has been crucified.
- As a new humanity or a new creation of God, we are to see ourselves as we truly are and as God sees us.
- Paul's prayers and letters characterize his hope for people to see who they are in Christ and what it means for the church (Eph 3:14-21; Col 1:9-12).

3.) The Temple of God

- Christ declared himself in the gospels to be the true temple (John 2:13-25).
- What we find in the NT epistles is that the temple of God theme, through Jesus, is used to describe God with his people.
- In the NT we find four key themes in regard to God's presence with his people.
 - 1.) God's presence is with his people, not in a building (2 Cor 6:16).
 - 2.) Each individual person is the temple of God (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:16-17; 6:12-20; 2 Cor 5:2; 6:16; 1 John 3:24; 4:13).

3.) The church as a whole is the temple of God (Eph 2:19-22; 1 Pet 2:4-8).

4.) Christ is the cornerstone of the church; the temple of God (Matt 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; 1 Cor 3:11; 1 Pet 2:4-8).

- Christ as the chief cornerstone demonstrates four things for the people of God.

- 1.) As the foundation and builder, he is Lord over his church.

- 2.) God's presence with his people is through Jesus the cornerstone of the new temple of God.

- 3.) As the true temple that was raised up in three days (John 2:13ff); God's people as his temples are assured of resurrection too (1 Cor 15:1ff).

- 4.) God will never again dwell in a stone temple, for there is only one foundation, one temple, and one meeting place with God—Jesus Christ.

- When Jesus came he showed us the glory of God, that glory which was in the temple, but now that Jesus is gone, his glory continues to show forth, not in a building, but through our lives.

4.) A Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood

- God promised under the old covenant that Israel would be his chosen race, a holy nation and a royal priesthood, a people for his own possession (Exo 19:3-6).

- In the NT we see this called out body, the church, become all that God intended for Israel through Jesus Christ.

- 1.) The church is a chosen race (1 Pet 2:9; Col 3:12).

- 2.) The church is a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; 5:10).

- 3.) The church is a holy nation (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 5:9; cf., Gal 3:28; Col 3:11).

- 4.) The church is God's own possession (1 Pet 2:9; Titus 2:14).

- 5.) The people of the church are the sons and daughters of God (2 Cor 6:18; cf., John 1:12; Rom 8:14-19; Gal 3:26; 4:6-7).

- 6.) The church is repopulating Jerusalem (Gal 4:25-27; Heb 12:18-24).

- The church is the people of God, and in Christ is all that Israel was to be.

5.) The Body of Christ

- The idea of body finds its greatest explanation in 1 Corinthians 12. There are two key elements to Paul's idea of the body.

1.) Jesus is the head of the body (Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:18; 2:19-20).

2.) The body demonstrates the unity and diversity found in the body (1 Cor 12:13-26).

- Because the saints in Christ are a body, there is need for one another.

1.) We are to encourage one another and build one another up so that we do not fall away and love this present world (Matt 13:1ff; 1 Thess 5:11; 2 Tim 4:10; Heb 6:1ff; 3:13; 10:25).

2.) We are to care for one another and bear each others burdens (Gal 6:2, 10; 2 Thess 3:13; 1 Tim 6:18; Heb 13:16; 3 John 1:11).

3.) We are to love and serve one another (John 13:34-35; 15:12-17; Rom 12:10; 13:8; 14:1ff; 1 Cor 8-9; 13:1ff; Gal 5:13; Eph 4:2; 1 Thess 3:12; 4:9; 2 Thess 1:3; Heb 10:24; James 2:1-17; 1 Pet 1:22; 4:8; 5:14; 1 John 3:10-11, 17, 23; 4:11-12, 20-21; 2 John 1:5).

6.) The Bride of Christ

- In the OT Israel was called to be God's bride.
- The idea of God being married to his people extends well back into the OT, even prior to the formation of a formal nation.
- The first institution of creation for humanity was marriage (Gen 2:24). Marriage was always meant to be a portrayal of God's relationship to his people.
- This relationship was not simply between him and the nation of Israel, but to all peoples.
- The greatest expression of this bridal language for the new people of God is found in Ephesians 5:22-33.
- Marriage is not about me or my spouse, but it is about this profound mystery revealed in the NT—the church as the faithful and spotless bride of Christ.
- The church of God is to be pure, free from any worldly defilement, free from idolatry and sin (Eph 5:26-27).
- God not only takes us as his own (marries us), but provides the method and the means (which is atonement) of keeping this covenant relationship.

- Our faithfulness to God really has nothing to do with us being “faithful,” but everything to do with God’s faithfulness provided through his Son Jesus.

7.) The Fellowship of the Spirit

- The fellowship of the Spirit is the mark of God’s new humanity (2 Cor 13:14; Phil 2:1).
- The giving of the Spirit not only binds us together in fellowship with God (1 John 1:3), but also with each other (1 John 1:7).
- The Spirit not only binds us together, but he brings conviction and growth to the body.
- The message of the Spirit is to glorify Christ (John 16:13-16).
- Specifically the presence of the Spirit does three things for the church.
 - 1.) The Spirit confirms the witness of Christ from the OT. The foundation of the OT was the spirit of Christ testifying to his coming (1 Pet 1:10-12).
 - 2.) The Spirit reveals the truth as it is in Christ to the apostles (1 Cor 2:10-16; Eph 2:20; 3:3-5; Heb 1:1; 2:3-4).
 - 3.) The Spirit reminds us of the words and deeds of Jesus (John 14:17, 25-26; 15:26; John 16:13-16; Eph 4:30-32), so that we might be holy as he is holy (cf., 1 John 3:1-3).

8.) A Pillar of Truth

- The church is called to be the pillar of truth (1 Tim 3:15).
- The basis for such truth and purity is found in the mystery of godliness, namely Jesus Christ.
- Paul outlines why the church is to be pure:
 - 1.) Because the church is to reflect by common confession the mystery of godliness.
 - 2.) What is the mystery of godliness: Jesus Christ himself.
 - a.) He was revealed in the flesh (John 1:14; Gal 4:4).
 - b.) He was vindicated by the Spirit (John 1:32; Rom 1:4; 8:11).
 - c.) He was seen by angels (Matt 28:2-7; Luke 24:4-7; John 20:12-13).

d.) He was proclaimed among the nations (Matt 28:18-20).

e.) He was believed on in the world (Rev 5:9).

f.) He was taken up in glory (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:2, 9-11; Rev 5:12).

- The church is to be godly as her king is and as the church is to carry out the task of truth and protecting and proclaiming this mystery of godliness—the gospel.
- In the NT we see several ways that the church is to manifest doctrinal and ethical truth and purity
 - 1.) God has given us the Scriptures (2 Tim 3:14-17).
 - 2.) God has given us the Spirit (1 Cor 12:3; 1 John 2:27).
 - 3.) God has given us elders (1 Tim 3:11-13; Titus 1:5-9).
 - 4.) God has given us safeguards (Matt 18:15-20).
 - 5.) God has given us specific instruction on what his household is to look like (1 Tim 2:1-15; 4:1-5:16; 6:1-16; Titus 2:1-15).

9.) Witness before the World

- How could Israel be a light to the nations if she was idolatrous and unholy?
- What Israel could not and did not do, Jesus did. Jesus is the light to the Gentile nations (Matt 4:16; Luke 2:32).
- The message of the kingdom continues to forth through the apostles (Matt 28:18-20; Luke 24:48; John 15:27).
- Paul makes some startling statements about what it means to be a witness before the world.
 - 1.) It means that it is through weakness that God carries about the preaching of the cross (1 Cor 1:18-31).
 - 2.) It means that the preaching of Jesus is empowered by the Spirit (1 Cor 2:1-16; cf., Rom 15:19; 1 Cor 4:20).
 - 3.) It means the church has been entrusted with the message of a better covenant (2 Cor 3:1-18).

4.) It means that our message is about Jesus as Lord; thus, no matter what happens to us it ultimately does not matter (2 Cor 4:1-18)

5.) It means knowing that this life is not the end of our existence, but the meaning of our life is found in Christ, by which men are reconciled to God. Now we have been given this ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:1-21).

6.) Finally, it means that if we are to be proud of anything it is our salvation in Jesus (Gal 6:14). In other words, we are to only boast in Christ (Rom 5:11; 1 Cor 1:29-31; 2 Cor 10:17; Phil 3:3).

- The message of the church is simple: In Jesus God has made peace with man (Rom 5:12ff); however, while that peace is for all men (John 3:16; 1 Tim 4:10), it is given only to those who trust in Jesus for their salvation (Acts 4:12).

10.) Resident Aliens

- From the very beginning God declared his creation good (Gen 1:4ff). The problem was never with the created, but with the sin that distorted it. The whole cosmos was subjected to the futility and curse of sin; thus, in keeping in line with the premise of redemption we should not be surprised to find that restoration involves both the creature and the creation.
- What this teaches us is that God's purposes are beyond the scope of simply humanity, but extend to creation and culture too.
- In one sense we are already home, but since the world is still contaminated with sin, we as Christians are resident aliens.
- So as the people of God, how are we to live as resident aliens?
- The message of the book of James: living with wisdom and truth as sons of God in this brief time of exile or wilderness experience (e.g., manna from heaven; John 6:50).
- Peter also speaks to saints living in Babylon (both literally and symbolically) that while we are in this present evil age or this time of wilderness, under the dominion of another empire, we are to abstain from every evil thing, to be at peace with outsiders, to beware of false teachers, and to anticipate the return of Christ (1 Pet 1:1; 2:11-3:22; 5:10-14; 2 Pet 2:1; Jude 1:5-16).
- For the NT apostles, while the kingdom God was here in an already manner, they fully anticipated the complete manifestation of the kingdom (Rom 14:17; 1 Cor 4:20; Col 1:13; 4:11; 1 Thess 2:12).
- Perseverance into the kingdom was an essential message of the apostles as they lived in this world (Acts 14:22; 1 Cor 15:24, 50; Gal 5:21; Eph 5:5; 2 Thess 1:5; 2 Tim 4:1; 4:18; 2 Pet 1:11; Rev 1:9).

- As resident aliens the church is to remain watchful and abstain from sin in light of the coming of the Lord (1 Pet 2:11).
- No matter what happens God's people are hidden and secure in Christ (John 10:28; Rom 8:37-39; Col 3:1-4). The blessed hope of the NT is that despite persecution and suffering, Christ will come back to rescue his people and they will be resurrected like he was in perfection and glory (1 Cor 15:42-57; 1 Thess 4:13-5:11; 2 Thess 1:5-10; Titus 2:13; Heb 9:28).
- Because of this hope, believers are to persevere. God promises several things to his church; to those who persevere to the end (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26-27; 3:5, 12, 21).

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