

What The Temple Means

The Temple of God was a magnificent creation, one of the greatest structures in the ancient world. It was designed by God Himself, and so this should come as no surprise. But because the Temple is not considered important by Christianity today, and because the 40 or so chapters in the Bible which describe the Temple and its accessories are... well, mind-numbingly boring, the Temple is very poorly understood.

Also, as always, the few who find this sort of task interesting ignore the basic rule of Bible study that the Bible interprets the Bible. They rely on Josephus, and on the Mishna or Talmud (Jewish traditions written 100 years or more after the Temple was destroyed). They lean on their own imaginations and human reasoning, but NOT on the Bible.

But the Temple needs to be explained and understood because the Temple IS important to us. The Temple represents one of our favorite things in the whole wide world – US. So many people read **1 Corinthians 3:17** and miss the obvious, and I mean OBVIOUS, meaning – that the Temple is a building designed to describe US, our future, our salvation, our flaws – in a sense, it is a statue of us.

Every time we learn something about the Temple, we are learning something about ourselves. Every time God offered something in the Temple, something corresponding to that has happened, or will happen, to us. Everything God put in the Temple He either has put, or will put, into us.

The Temple is not some boring building for a long-dead priesthood. The Temple is a living, breathing body that we all have, it is a house God is building so He will have a permanent home. It is map of what we are, and it is vital that we understand...

LESSON 58: WHAT THE TEMPLE MEANS

Why does God want a temple? **2 Corinthians 6:16**. What exactly lives in our temple? **1 Corinthians 6:19**. Pay close attention – the Temple is *not* your heart! The Temple is your BODY. Your entire body from your hair to your toe nails is pictured by the Temple of God.

Is there a difference between a tabernacle and a temple? **2 Corinthians 5:1**. When did God first dwell in a house, and not a tent? **1 Chronicles 17:5**. Is God's Temple a building made by humans? **Acts 7:48-49**. Are we presently a house of God, or merely a tent? **Hebrews 3:6, 2 Corinthians 5:2**.

We are, today, in frail physical bodies which are prone to decay and vanish like moths (**Job 4:19**). We are not a house God can get comfortable in, for as soon as we get the worst of the holes in our tent

patched so that it doesn't leak, we collapse and die, and God must go find a new tent. But we yearn to be clothed with a HOUSE which does not decay; an incorruptible immortal body that God can finally relax in, knowing it will not fall down around Him in a few years.

That, briefly, is the difference between the tabernacle of Moses and the Temple of Solomon. Moses made God a tent – a tent which symbolized our present bodies. But Solomon built God a *house*. And God said of that house (on Zion, see **Micah 4:2**), that He had settled down to rest there forever (**Psalms 132:13-14**).

There have been three places God has dwelt on this Earth. The first was the tabernacle or tent; it was temporary and moved a lot. This represents our current bodies (**2 Corinthians 5:1-4**). The second was the Temple of Solomon, which was a permanent structure – at least in principle, though it was destroyed by sin (**1 Kings 9:7**).

The third was the Temple of Ezra, rebuilt on the same foundation as the original Temple and in every major dimension the same except that it was shorter – we'll cover the details later. It also did not have the same things inside of it, for there was no Ark – it probably having been lost in Babylon, or stolen by the Egyptians – and many of the decorations were built cheaper, not having the resources of Solomon behind it.

This Temple of Ezra was repaired and greatly enlarged by the pagan king Herod who wanted a lasting monument to his own awesomeness, as well as to please the Jews. Construction started around 19 BC, and 46 years later it was still under construction (**John 2:20**). It was completely destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

Now think for a moment; if the first Temple was *first*, and it represents *our* future bodies; and the second Temple was second, then it would logically represent *whose* future bodies? The second resurrection people of course! Also the fact that it was much “cheaper” supports that idea. Much more on all this later.

THE PROBLEM

Most people just skim the boring parts of the Bible. But those who start to really pay attention and try to convert the words into a mental picture quickly find that the Temple in Ezekiel is not all there. There are major pieces that are just ignored. For example, Ezekiel does not give vertical dimensions for the Temple.

Likewise, when you study the Temple of Solomon you find many key pieces of information, pieces without which you cannot build an accurate model, are just not there – such as the fact that Solomon's Temple apparently had no walls! Solomon gives us one measurement for the rooms – apparently an inside measurement – but no information on how thick the walls were!

Yet a structure like this had to have substantial walls! So we are left to either subtract walls from the measurements given, or add wall thickness to the measurements entirely at random. But there's another option – compare and add ALL the different accounts of the Temple in the Bible! And it so happens that in most details, Ezekiel's prophetic Temple was built on the same plan!

So if you add the information you glean from his book, you'll find dimensions for the walls, as well as the fact that the whole structure was 100 cubits when the walls are taken into account (**Ezekiel 41:13**), compared with 70 cubits as recorded in **1 Kings 6:2-3**, where the walls are ignored!

Both are true – but both only tell part of the story! As always. Even between the parallel accounts in Kings and Chronicles we find that one or the other ignores important facts; for example, there are lots of side rooms in the Temple mentioned in **1 Kings 6:5-6**, but not in Chronicles. Yet the number is not given even there, so we must go to **Ezekiel 41:6** to find there were three stories, with 33 rooms per floor for a total of 99.

The walls of the Temple, and the rooms on the side of the Temple, mean that the Temple's real width was 52 cubits wide. (This measurement was obtained by adding up the figures in **Ezekiel 41** – a large study, which we aren't going to get into today.) The point is, the Temple is complicated and takes a lot of work to fully understand even what it looked like – much less to understand what it MEANS!

So how do we understand it? The same as everything else: *“precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line by line, line by line; here a little, there a little”* (**Isaiah 28:10**). **We add up all the facts about all the temples in all the Bible, then distill them down into a single, clear picture.**

Unfortunately, we don't have the space to do all that here. The Temple is almost always referred to by its inside dimensions of 20x60x30, plus a 20x10x120 porch, and there is a LOT of symbolism built around this sense. Even though those were not the *real* dimensions, only the sum of the dimensions of the inside rooms, God almost always refers to it by those dimensions.

The real dimensions *are* important, and they have their own symbolism. But since God usually refers to the buildings by the idealized dimensions, as in **1 Kings 6:2-3**, we will be working primarily with those numbers today.

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE FIRST TEMPLE

Unless stated otherwise, “the Temple” will always mean the Temple of Solomon in this lesson. The Temple building itself was divided into five sections: the porch, the Holy Place, the Most Holy Place, the side chambers, and the upper rooms.

The last two are lesser known, and we won't be studying them today. Suffice it to say that the side chambers ran all around the back and both sides of the Temple and were used for storing holy things, tithe, etc. The upper chambers were contained within the pinnacle of the porch.

How big was the Temple? **1 Kings 6:2-3**. So the floor plan was 60 cubits by 20 cubits wide, with a height of 30 cubits. In addition to the 60 cubits, a 10-cubit porch was made on the front. Thus the entire idealized building would have been 70x20 cubits, with three divisions.

Now read **1 Kings 6:16-20**. So here the 60 cubits is divided into two parts; first the oracle or Most Holy Place or sanctuary – the place where the Ark of the Covenant lived behind the veil and where God dwelt; this was a 20 cubit cube, equal on all sides. Only the high priest could enter here, and only once a year on the Day of Atonement.

Second was the holy place, the house; this was where most of the stuff that happened in the Temple took place. The censer, candlestick, showbread, and so on was all in this part of the Temple. And it measured 20 wide, just like the Most Holy Place, 40 long, and 30 high.

If you're paying attention you may have noticed that in this chapter we already have a disagreement; first it said the entire house was 30 cubits tall; then it said that the holy place was only 20 cubits. The answer is in **verse 16**, where it describes the oracle or Most Holy Place being built **INSIDE** of the rest of the building, with the oracle reaching "*from the floor to the rafters*" (RSV).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Before we get too bogged down in details, I want you to understand the sort of thing we're studying here. I know I said the Temple represented us, and therefore that it was important to us. But you didn't learn anything new because of that – not yet. But now you'll start to see how the patterns interweave.

As you well know, God's plan is 7,000 years long; this plan is divided up into three sections – a millennium, 10 centuries long. A period where man had access to God only via a mediator – the Old Testament – which was 40 centuries long. And a period where the veil was torn and man had direct access to the Holy of Holies which lasted 20 centuries long.

Now if you replace "centuries" with "cubits", you see a *DIRECT correlation there!* The dimensions of the Temple and the length of the plan of God, in centuries, are precisely the same! This is one of the smallest of the many pieces of understanding you can receive when you study the Temple!

Most of mankind was blocked off from direct access to God for 4,000 years; we didn't have a high priest touched with the feeling of our infirmities, no one to make intercession for us, and we were strictly forbidden from entering the Holy of Holies. Even the high priest only entered once a year, and then it was so fogged up with incense he couldn't see anything (**Hebrews 9:8**).

Then, 4,000 years from creation, the veil was torn right down the middle. All of a sudden, mankind had access directly to the throne room of God. It can't be an accident that after 40 centuries of being behind a veil, we broke through into the Holy of Holies; and that after 40 cubits in the Temple, one arrives in the Holy of Holies!

Nor can it be an accident that 20 centuries of the New Testament era are to go by before the return of Christ and the beginning of the millennium, while the Holy of Holies is exactly 20 cubits long. When Christ returns we'll have no more need for a temple ourselves; we'll BE the Temple of God!

Now in front of the Temple was a porch; adding exactly 10 cubits to the length of the Temple. Can it be an accident that the millennium will add 10 centuries to the previous 60, making the whole structure 70 cubits long, just as the plan of God for dealing with the firstfruits is 70 centuries long? The numbers overlay so perfectly with the plan of God that it's difficult to argue.

The Temple represents our body; and in the sense that all of man shares the same body, the lifespan of man is 70 centuries in this present age; can it be an accident that David says, "*The days of our lives are seventy years*" (**Psalms 90:10, NKJV**) – **just as the Temple, our body, is 70 cubits long?**

In addition, up until 20 years of age, children are innocent – their parents are responsible for their actions. Then they serve in the military or in the Temple or just live in general from 20 to 60 years of

age – that’s 40 years, the same amount of time as Israel wandered in the wilderness! – and then presumably they retire or serve as elders for the last 10 (**Leviticus 27:2-3, 7, Numbers 1:20, 1 Chronicles 23:24**). Once again showing that this is all part of the same pattern.

Not only that, but in another layer of symbolism, you will recall from the last lesson that we are pictured by the sons of Aaron. How long are the sons of Aaron trapped in this Temple while they are being sanctified for the priesthood? **Leviticus 8:31-35**. What happened the next day? **Leviticus 9:1-7**.

So after seven days being trapped in a physical temple, Aaron/Jesus anoints His sons/the saints to work in the priesthood, and they begin to offer sacrifices for ALL the people. Then what happens? **Verses 23-24**. The glory of God appears to all Israel! The glory of God appearing to people is repeatedly connected with salvation and so on; so what is prophesied to happen on the 8th day of the Feast of Tabernacles? **John 7:37-39**.

After the millennium and the 7,000 year plan is finished, the second resurrection happens and the great white throne judgment of **Revelation 20** begins; on that day God begins to save unsaved Israel. God repeatedly spoke of circumcising their hearts and so on in that day – which starts the eighth day from the creation of Adam!

And when are newborn children of Israel circumcised? **Leviticus 12:3**. **This is those who, according to Psalms 90:10, make it to 80 years by reason of strength!** And the Rotherham version renders it “*Yet, their boast, is labour and sorrow, For it hath passed quickly, and we have flown away.*”

Despite their plan being 8 days instead of 7, their boast was labor and sorrow. Why is there sorrow in that 8th day? **Ezekiel 20:43**. Because that is when those people who failed to get into the first resurrection must have their joy turned into mourning, that they might be saved! (**Psalms 126:5-6, Ecclesiastes 7:2-5**).

Are you starting to get the idea? ALL of these apparently random and disconnected laws and statutes are in fact part of one gigantic puzzle which, when you put it together, reduces down to an incredibly simple picture! One single, beautiful picture which is painted with the brush strokes of ten thousand laws!

THE PORCH

The porch was ten cubits long and twenty cubits wide. Now we already said that represented the Millennium, but let’s dig deeper into that idea in **Zechariah 5:1-2**. This is the only other thing in the Bible with those exact dimensions.

Now remember the basic idea of the Millennium is to show that the law of God is a good law, if you keep it (**Galatians 3:12**). And of course, it has never actually been kept for more than a few years in any nation, so the Millennium will be a chance for God, with the help of the spirits of just men made perfect, to prove that the law was indeed good for man.

That’s why we see sacrifices being offered in **Zechariah 14:21, Jeremiah 33:18**, etc. Still a physical system, but administered by incorruptible rulers, to prove once and for all that the fault was with the PEOPLE, and not the law (**Hebrews 8:8**).

So back to Zechariah, if this does indeed picture the porch of the Temple and therefore the Millennium, what does it tell us about it? **Zechariah 5:3**. On this gigantic scroll, there is a *curse* written! What is the curse? Apparently, it says “*thou shalt not steal*”, and “*thou shalt not take the name of God in vain*”! And are those laws a curse? **Galatians 3:10**. **Yes! To those who *don't* obey them!**

What's more, this scroll is written on BOTH SIDES! What else had those laws and was written on both sides? **Exodus 32:15**. So this scroll, with the dimensions of the Temple porch, had the Ten Commandments written on it! So what's so special about it? **Zechariah 5:4**.

Right now, that law is *not* being sent into the house of the thief and consuming it – sure, it causes him the normal amount of suffering that breaking the law causes, **but God is not actively pursuing thieves and liars today! They are not yet being judged!** But what will happen in the Millennium and beyond? **Isaiah 30:21**.

This is just like studying prophecy – we make bridges, and connect symbols back and forth through the Bible using God's unbreakable word to form connections, then networks, finally webs of facts and logic that reveal the entire plan of God, in every painstaking detail.

THE HEIGHT OF THE TEMPLE

...but those were only the *linear* dimensions of the Temple! We learned *all* that just from knowing the LENGTH of a building! **When you consider the thousands of tiny details included in the Temple, can you imagine the information that is locked away in those seemingly trivial facts?**

The height of the Temple was 30 cubits along the 60 cubits length of the Temple proper; but how high was the porch? **2 Chronicles 3:4**. So in the last ten cubits – or rather, the first ten cubits – the height quadrupled to 120 cubits! This was huge for the era, so huge that most modern scholars say it was impossible to build. But who designed this Temple? **1 Chronicles 28:11-12, 19**.

Even if Solomon, the wisest man ever to live, could not have designed the architectural marvel which it unarguably was... God could have, and did. But what does that mean? Well, think about what height means in the Bible. Starting with **Daniel 4:20, 22**.

Based on that scripture, what does the Bible clearly say that height equals? *Greatness! We can connect it to glory as well by comparing Ezekiel 31:10 and verse 18*. Of course when Satan wanted to achieve ultimate greatness, where did he want to go? **Isaiah 14:14**.

So now look at the plan of the Temple. For 6,000 years the saints were 30 cubits tall in glory. Then, at the end of the sixth day they suddenly quadruple in greatness! Suddenly their glory was 120 cubits! Surely it doesn't take much thought to say this is them *after the first resurrection!*

You might ask “they only quadruple?” – but think about how Jesus was “*made a LITTLE lower than the angels*” (**Hebrews 2:9**). It doesn't say a LOT lower; just a little. So quadrupling is pretty reasonable. Then, too, God certainly measures greatness rather differently than we do.

Remember how the second Temple, the one Ezra built, was only half as high on the porch? **Ezra 6:3**. All other measurements remain the same. So why the difference? Now we have the facts to answer that. If height equals glory, then those who are saved in the second resurrection will be more glorious than their current selves – but still never as glorious as we who are saved in this time will be.

In fact, they will be precisely half our height. And that in turn connects back to **Deuteronomy 21:17**. The firstborn receive precisely *DOUBLE* the inheritance of the secondborn! Likewise the elders who rule well are worthy of how much more than others? **1 Timothy 5:17**. A double portion! When everything ties together this way, you know you have the answer!

As I said, God measures things differently than man does, and upon seeing these saints from the second resurrection, we can expect a mixed reaction: **Ezra 3:11-13**. But how did God feel about it? **Haggai 2:3, 9**. Despite the fact that by every human measurement the second Temple was inferior from the first, *God said it would have greater glory!*

Why? How could the second resurrection be more glorious than the former? Two reasons; first, simply because while there may be only 144,000 firstfruits... there will be BILLIONS of secondfruits. And second, because firstfruits will all be from a certain type of mold; they are being trained to be kings and priests. That means they will mostly be go-getters, risk-takers, people with strong spirits and opinions, people who like to solve problems. It's almost a requirement for the job of a king.

But the secondfruits can be *anything*, as long as it's righteous. As you studied so long ago in lessons 15-16, grain is great, but eating grain all the time is boring. You can't wait until the fall harvest comes when you can eat the massive variety of fruits and vegetables that will be harvested at Tabernacles! God feels the same way.

The second Temple was less glorious in all of these ways, but it was also part of a much larger complex with more buildings and larger Temple grounds. Remember what the disciples said to Jesus? **Matthew 24:1, Mark 13:1-2**. Buildings, plural!

The original Temple only had one main building, as far as we know. Again, this contrasts the firstfruits with the variety and complexity of the harvest of the secondfruits. The prophetic Temple of Ezekiel, which has never been built, was built on the same pattern as the one Solomon built, but it describes many other buildings around it. I'm not yet sure what each of them represent, but rest assured they do tell a story – if only we had ears to hear.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

What was inside the Ark of the Covenant? **Hebrews 9:4**. Surely by now you're already asking "what do these things represent?" knowing that these things are symbolic of much deeper things. So let's look at it one at a time. What does the bread of life represent? **John 6:48-51**. So then, inside the Ark we have a symbol representing Jesus.

This means that the Ark itself does *not* represent Jesus, since we already have one symbol for Him inside of it! And as you learned in the last lesson, God uses different symbols to represent *different things!*

So what do the Ten Commandments represent? The law, certainly. And the law produces what? **Romans 13:10**. And what is God? **1 John 4:8**. Therefore, keeping the law is acting like God – keeping the law perfectly, in every sense, is the divine nature.

But did Jesus come with His own laws, or someone else's? **John 8:28**. How many lawgivers are there? **James 4:12**. The law represents, not Jesus – but the person from whom He received the law, His

Father, the *Lawgiver*! Therefore the Ten Commandments in the Ark represent the spirit of the Father, just as the manna represents the spirit of Jesus!

There was only one other thing in the Ark – Aaron’s rod that budded. Let’s go back and read that story to find out why this is such a significant symbol – read **Numbers 17**, particularly **verses 7-8**. Two basic facts about this symbol; it was an almond branch (after all, you know them *by their fruits, right?*). And it was a symbol of the high priest – a direct symbol of authority of God. That was the whole purpose of the miracle, to show WHO God wanted in charge! (See **verse 10**.)

But we can support that interpretation by reading **Jeremiah 1:9-12**. Jeremiah was being set up as a prophet by God, given his commission to be OVER the kingdoms... and the symbol God gave him was the symbol of *an almond branch*!

God gave Jeremiah the exact same symbol of authority as He gave to Aaron! But now there’s another key to understanding the Bible we haven’t talked about much – **look at the Hebrew definitions of the nouns you study**. God usually names things what they are – for example, the word translated *almond* is the Hebrew *shaqed*.

Strong’s says it means “*the almond (tree or nut; as being the earliest in bloom)*”. So a physical fact – that almonds are the first trees to blossom – reveals a spiritual fact, for who is earliest to bloom if not the 144,000 *firstfruits*! Those who will wield the authority God gave to Aaron and Jeremiah as kings and priests!!

But there’s more! The Hebrew word for almond is *shaqed*, but it comes from the root word *shaqad*, meaning “*to be alert, i.e. sleepless; hence to be on the lookout (whether for good or ill):— hasten, remain, wake, watch (for)*” – which is the exact job of the kings and priests in the world to come – to be on the lookout “for good or ill” to either reward or correct it. Because we are to be the... WATCHMEN! (**Ezekiel 3:17**).

This explains the contents of the Ark – the spirit of the Father, the spirit of the Son, and the authority of the 144,000 saints! But would you believe that this is only the BEGINNING of the understanding to be had here??

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Go back to Genesis, and see what the contents of the midst of the Garden of Eden were – read **Genesis 2:9-10**. *So there were three things*! Do you think we can find a connection between them? Starting with the easiest one, what does the Water of Life represent? **John 7:38-39**. But is Jesus the ultimate source of that water? **John 5:26**.

So the River of Life represents the Father – or, to connect it to the layer we just studied, to the Ten Commandments! Now, what about the Tree of Life? **Proverbs 11:30**. The “fruit of the righteous” is a Tree of Life; compare that to **Revelation 22:2**. So the Tree of Life had twelve types of fruits. Now we know that trees are often used to represent people in the Bible – see **Zechariah 4:11**, **Daniel 4:20-22**, **Ezekiel 17**, **Judges 9:8-15**, etc; but who is this specific tree?

We know this tree has leaves “*for the healing of the nations*”. And what makes it possible for us to be healed? **Isaiah 53:5**. And this tree bears twelve types of fruits – in yet another layer of symbolism, Jesus portrays Himself as a vine, and what does He call the TWELVE disciples? **John 15:1-8**.

In this version, God is the husbandman, Christ is the vine, and on that vine are twelve branches which have fruits. *The exact symbols which were in the Ark* – the Father’s spirit, Christ’s spirit, and the authority of the NC church – the apostles being the *foundation* of that church! (**Ephesians 2:20**). *And in the Ark, they were portrayed as a BRANCH with buds!*

Furthermore, on a grander scale, Christ is saving 12,000(!) fruits from 12(!) tribes of Israel in the first resurrection! (**Revelation 7:1-8, 14:1-5**). So in at least two ways, Christ bears twelve manner of fruits to God, the husbandman!

So in the version back in the Garden, the TREE of life can only be Christ. The Tree of Life grows BECAUSE of the Water of Life – deriving strength from the Father! **Ezekiel 47:12**. That leaves us with the last symbol – the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which corresponds to Aaron’s almond staff that budded.

What did Satan say about this tree? **Genesis 3:5**. And did God confirm this statement? **Genesis 3:22**. Most people assume Satan was lying about that, but God said that’s exactly what happened to them – they “became as one of us”, and “knew good from evil”. You’ve learned in these lessons that the phrase “to know good and evil” means **to have the authority to CHOOSE good from evil!**

The children in the wilderness didn’t know good from evil until they were twenty, even though Adam and Eve had eaten the fruit (**Deuteronomy 1:39**). *Because until that age they were forced to submit their authority to their parents!* But once they were twenty, they became responsible for their own decisions! **Just like Adam and Eve did when they ate the fruit of the forbidden tree!**

They were not READY to be watchmen, and eating the almonds symbolized their taking that power to themselves! You have to QUALIFY yourself to judge good and evil! You must first OVERCOME your own nature, and show that *you will choose wisely* when given the choice between good and evil! (**Hebrews 5:14**).

They were not ready for the strong meat, because their senses had not been exercised, therefore God, like any parent, forbade His children to eat food which was not good for them, which they could not digest! But it is obvious from that scripture that God intended to give the authority to judge right and wrong to mankind *once we had proven ourselves worthy!*

This power to choose between good and evil is what was stolen by Adam and Eve when they ate of that almond tree! But they were not ready to take of it yet! They were not QUALIFIED to take of that tree, for to rule over others, and make decisions about right and wrong, you must first prove yourself fit!

Christ OVERCAME the world (**John 16:33**), and THEN, ONLY then, was He handed that almond branch once given to Aaron! Only then was He symbolically given to eat of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and given “*all power in heaven and in earth!*” (**Matthew 28:18**).

THE NEW JERUSALEM

As I said, there are many layers to this understanding – and we find in **Revelation 22:1-2** another one which we’ve already mostly explained. You’ll find the elements from the Garden of Eden are represented, with the River of Life flowing out of the throne of God – but with one major difference. Now there are MANY Trees of Life! How else can a tree be on BOTH sides of the river?

Bridging back to another version of the same prophecy in **Ezekiel 47:1**, we see the same River of Life flowing out from under the throne – that is, out from under the ARK, which is the throne of God (**2 Samuel 6:2, Exodus 25:18-22**).

This water proceeds out from the throne – from the Ark – where the Ten Commandments are stored – where the Father dwells – from whence LIVING waters go out from Jerusalem (**Zechariah 14:8**), which is just another way of saying that the LAW goes forth from Zion (**Isaiah 2:3**), and then spreads like waters over the entire Earth! (**Isaiah 11:9**).

But there is more to that subject, too. For Ezekiel, in his vision of the New Jerusalem, saw this river and this tree as well – with a few more details. For Christ is not the only tree who dwells beside that river... read **Ezekiel 47:1-5**. These waters grow at an exponential rate, rising through the ankles, knees, waist and finally over the head. We can only assume they kept on getting deeper, though Ezekiel could no longer measure them.

This is not a steady progression, but one that rapidly increases as you pass down the river, being measured every thousand cubits (~1/2 mile). This measurement corresponds to a period of time which I won't speculate on here. And these waters heal the waters of the Earth (**verse 8**). What do those earthly waters represent? **Revelation 17:1, 15**. So these spiritual waters will heal the peoples of the world who have been drunk on the whore's wine. ***Just as drinking water helps a hangover!***

There was only ONE tree in the Garden – the noun is definitely singular in Genesis. Yet according to **Revelation 22:2**, “*on either side of the river, was there the tree of life*” – which seems odd, for how can a tree be on both sides of such a mighty river? It can only grow on one side or the other! But Ezekiel clears it up by telling us there were MANY trees in **Ezekiel 47:7**. And according to **Ezekiel 47:12** these trees grow there *BECAUSE of the waters of life!*

So there was ONE Tree of Life in Genesis, and there will be “VERY MANY” in the Holy City! What can this mean? Remember, that Christ received life from His Father (**John 5:26**)! This is why He grows on the banks of the great River of Life!

And Jesus' Tree of Life has fruits. It has these fruits, BECAUSE of the living waters that come from God the Father! And the Father has given Christ this water, and this power to give life to others! But Christ goes a step further and promises to give us, not only life for ourselves, but the same ability to pass life on to others!

And what are fruits? *They are the way a tree reproduces!* They are SEEDS for new trees! First twelve; then those twelve have other fruits, and so on, **just like Jesus and the disciples! (2 Timothy 2:2)**. So the number of trees must grow as an exponential growth curve ***just as the water grows!***

Now why would the amount of water increase? Because, in addition to growing because of the water that flows from the Father, they also ADD their own incorruptible, holy spirits to that same water, increasing the volume of water and helping the younger trees grow! They will be WELLS OF WATER, springing up to everlasting life! (**John 4:14**). The scripture I quote all the time says plainly we will be ADDING to that River of Life! (**John 7:38**).

Christ is offering us a chance to be one of those incredibly special Tree of Life growing alongside the river of the spirit of God! A river that grows deeper, *exponentially*, as it flows out from Jerusalem! And as it grows, new trees are planted alongside it to add their own living waters to that River of Life to

swell its flow! The waters continue to grow deeper and deeper **until finally it fulfills the promise given in Isaiah 9:7 that “Of the increase of his government and peace THERE SHALL BE NO END”!**

THE HUMAN MIND

All these things explain each other and fit together and greatly reduce the complexity of the Bible, because you begin to see **it’s not about a thousand different things, but a thousand different ways to look at ONE thing!** And we still haven’t gotten to the good part yet! What we’ve said so far is that the Holy City of Ezekiel and Revelation is the same city; which has symbolism that corresponds directly to the Garden of Eden and also to the Ark of the Covenant.

But there’s another layer of symbol, even more important and much more personal! Remember what the Temple represents? **1 Corinthians 3:16**. Our bodies are the Temple – and that means the Ark represents something inside of us – and since Jesus and the Father dwell there, it can only mean our heart!

But that gives us a beautiful opportunity to tie this back to Lesson 53, for remember – there was ONE *mind* which contained the heart, spirit, and soul. If you’re paying close attention, you’ll notice that’s the same number of things we’ve been studying all lesson – one Ark, the Ten Commandments, the manna, and the rod of Aaron! One river and two trees inside ONE garden!

The heart represents our most basic desire, the source of all our impulses. It is our *law, the law of our carnal mind!* (**Romans 7:14-25**). But God’s basic desire, the source of all HIS impulses, HIS basic nature, is expressed in the Ten Commandments! God’s “id”, His heart, is spelled out in the law! Which, by definition, is a fountain of water! (**Proverbs 13:14**).

Likewise, we have a spirit – which is an advocate for doing the “right thing”. It tries to apply the lessons of our understanding to practical situations and render an ethical opinion to turn the letter of the law into the spirit of the law. Which is what Jesus does for God – having been touched with the feeling of our infirmities, He is able to apply the law to situations that the letter does not clearly spell out.

Finally, we have a soul – which must take the arguments of these two counselors under advisement and render a judgment. A decision that will determine what the whole body will do. And this ties back to the almond branch – the right to choose right and wrong for yourself. This is what the soul does – it determines right and wrong every minute of every day.

And these three things – heart, spirit, and soul – all dwell in the mind. Corresponding to the Ark, with its law, manna, and almond rod; or the Garden of Eden, with its water, Tree of Life, and Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil!

DETAILS OF THE GARDEN

I passed briefly over the fact that the trees were not just *in* the Garden, but specifically in the MIDST of the Garden (**Genesis 2:9, 3:3**), which means they were in a particular region of the Garden, a subsection of the larger Garden. Just as the Ark was a particular subsection in the deepest part of the middle of the Temple!

We can now use the facts from these different layers, knowing they all represent the same thing, to fill in the gaps in each other. For example, how did Solomon decorate the inside of the Temple? **1 Kings 6:29-35**. Notice the decorations were palm trees and blooming flowers – precisely the sort of thing one would see in a *garden in Eden*!

Now had you been in the Garden before it was blocked off from man, you would have seen angels there, as well as a border to separate “the midst of the Garden” from the rest of it. In the Temple, we see this represented as a chain of gold around the Most Holy Place, and cherubim carved on the walls of the Temple.

At the front door of the Temple – which faced the east – are more cherubim carved on the doors. And what was around the Garden? **Genesis 3:22-24**. When Adam and Eve were kicked out of the Garden, they were necessarily placed on the EAST side **because, like the Temple, that must have been the only exit!**

So the Garden as a whole corresponds to the Temple, and therefore in turn to our bodies; and the midst of the Garden corresponds to the Ark of the Covenant and therefore, in turn, our hearts. And all those trees and almonds and flowers and pomegranates and fruits and angels and so on that are so frequently portrayed in the Temple? They are simply reflecting the glory of the Garden where God placed the man He had made!

But what about that space between the midst of the Garden and the perimeter? Using two of the other layers, it makes perfect sense! Because outside the Ark/mind/midst, but still inside the Temple/body/Garden, we find the law of Moses – which was not a law of the spirit, but a law of the FLESH – which is the name for the area *between the mind and the skin*! (**Deuteronomy 31:26**).

Which is where Adam and Eve hid behind their fig leaves! (Genesis 3:8). The presence of the Lord, to follow the pattern of the other layers, can only have come from the midst of the Garden – therefore they hid elsewhere, in the carnal, OC-representing section of the Garden!

The Holy City has all these same symbols, but with some changes to reflect the fact that in the Holy City, there will be MANY Trees of Life all of whom wield the power of the priesthood. And those 144,000 will dwell in the midst of the city with the Father and the Son.

And around them will be a buffer zone between them and the edge of the city, just as our minds, the midst of Eden, and the Ark have the “body” between them and the gates which keep out the unholy! (**Revelation 22:14-15**).

BUILDING ON THAT

Knowing now that all these are different layers of the same picture, we no longer have to have any one layer be complete to understand it. For example, we know the Garden of Eden and the Temple were describing the same exact thing, just translated into different symbols – hidden in parables, to prevent the world from understanding it! (**Mark 4:11-12**).

What that means is that when we see something in the Temple, we know – whether or not Genesis mentions it – that there was SOMETHING that corresponds to it, in the same place, for the same purpose, in Eden! Likewise, there is something in the human body that pictures the same thing; and again in the New Jerusalem. That’s four separate layers of the same picture!

Further, though we didn't mention this before, there is a fifth layer in heaven – for weren't all these things shadows of heavenly things? **Hebrews 8:5, Hebrews 9:23**. So everything that was in the Temple exists in some form in heaven! We know for a fact there is an Ark in the heavenly Temple (**Revelation 11:19**).

This also means all those things in the throne room in **Revelation 4-6** correspond directly to all the other layers. For example, we know there is an altar in heaven, in the Temple on Earth, and in the new Jerusalem. That's 3 of 5 layers – so we know where to look for it in the other two!

If it follows the same pattern as the others – and of course, it does – then the altar in Eden would be right outside the gate of Eden, just outside the “Temple”. For where else would God have killed animals to cover their sins/nakedness? **Genesis 3:21**. Even though Adam and Eve were kicked out of the Temple, it doesn't mean they couldn't access the altar! So do we find men using this Edenic altar? **Genesis 4:3-12**.

Where were Cain and Abel bringing this offering, if not to the *altar* in front of Eden, *within sight* of the angels who stood before the gate with a flaming sword? *The same angels carved on the doors of the Temple!* Not one angel – more than one, at the gate of the Garden eastward! **Genesis 3:24**.

Compare that with the doors of the Temple eastward in **1 Kings 6:32-35**. And what do we find in heaven? **Revelation 5:11**. What about us – do we have angels around us? **Matthew 18:10, Psalms 91:11-12**. **These patterns are perfect. They are the reason the Bible was written – to show us the plan of God.**

Back to Genesis, after Cain's sacrifice was rejected at the altar, Abel was surely killed nearby, probably in a location corresponding precisely to where Isaac and Jesus were sacrificed. His blood was taken by the Earth (**Genesis 4:10-11**), just as the blood of sacrifices was poured out under the altar, and the souls in heaven cry out to God from under the altar, as we discussed in the previous lesson.

That's four of five known layers. We also have an altar in or near our bodies, a place to offer up living sacrifices (**Hebrews 13:10, 16-17, 1 Peter 1:5-9**). I'm not sure exactly where that is, or what it corresponds to – but that's the beauty of it. I don't have to – I know it HAS to be there, because it's there in the other four layers!

THE GUTS OF THE TEMPLE

Inside the Most Holy Place was the Ark, the two great angels – more on that next lesson – and nothing else. Inside the Holy Place there were only three things: a golden censer for burning incense, a golden candlestick with seven flames, and a golden table with twelve loaves of showbread on it.

As with everything else, these have direct analogues in all the other layers. There is a lot to say about them, but there is no space to explain it all here, so I will only hit the high points. Just the things you have to know to understand the next two lessons.

First, we have the “shew bread” in **Leviticus 24:5-9**. Literally, this means *the bread of the face*, because it was before God's face in the Temple seven days. A new batch was baked every Sabbath and the old was removed to be eaten by the priests.

We know it must symbolize something in the Temple in heaven, the holy city, the Garden of Eden, and the human body as well. I won't be able to show them all here, so let's focus on the Temple in heaven.

What does bread represent? **Matthew 26:26**. Into how many pieces did He break it? Same verse. What does a lump of dough represent? **1 Corinthians 5:7**. What does a loaf of bread represent? **Hosea 7:8**. The GWV translation says "...*Ephraim, you are like a half-baked loaf of bread.*"

This sets us up a specific principle that a TRIBE is a partially cooked loaf of bread. Once it's cooked – by fiery trials – then it will be ready to be "before His face". There are twelve groups of finished saints in the throne room of God. This has to correspond to **Revelation 7:4-8**.

So the twelve loaves represent, not the twelve tribes in general, but specifically the twelve tribes of firstfruits. Are they before the face of God? **Psalms 27:8**. Therefore they must be pictured in Revelation's throne room in **chapters 4-6**, but we'll answer the question indirectly first.

Something in the Temple of God in heaven is the book of life (**Revelation 20:12**). Knowing it's in heaven, it must also be in the Temple of Solomon. So where is it? We know they weren't in the Ark of the Covenant, since we have a comprehensive list of its contents. Surely it couldn't be outside the Temple, for nothing so holy would be stored outside.

It has to be one of the three things in the Temple; and since it has a record of the *twelve* tribes of saints, it has to be the only thing in the holy place with *twelve tribes* setting on it! There is much more, and better proof, but as I said – I must be brief. But I will show you one example of what you can do with this new understanding.

In **1 Samuel 21**, in a situation which Jesus later condoned (**Matthew 12:3-4**), David was hungry and ate the showbread. The priest consented, even though it was strictly reserved for the family of the HIGH priest, and ONLY to be eaten in the Holy Place! (**Leviticus 24:9**). **Not even regular priests were allowed to eat it!**

So the obvious question is, how could Jesus justify David breaking the law? In **Revelation 14:4** the firstfruits are "undefiled with women". This means, specifically, that they were not corrupted by the doctrines of the various false churches in the world. And if you'll recall, that was the only condition the priest put upon David and his men in **1 Samuel 21:4-6**!

But it was legal because David WAS a firstfruit. Therefore it was David's bread to eat! The bread he ate represented *himself and his mighty men*, and they in turn represented the 144,000 who followed Jesus everywhere He went and were *undefiled with women*!

THE GOLDEN CENSER

The golden censer, also called the golden altar (because the main altar outside the Temple was made of brass), was just in front of the door to the Most Holy Place. Again, no space to prove this in detail, but the short answer is, this censer is a kind of guard for the Most Holy Place. Compare **Leviticus 16:12** and **Leviticus 10:1-2**.

If a qualified person offers the appropriate incense on the altar, they are accepted and "they die not". But when rebels try to access the throne room of God, they are consumed with fire – remind you of

2 Thessalonians 1:9? The destruction comes FROM God's presence, just as it destroyed Nadab and Abihu.

A nearly identical thing happened in **2 Chronicles 26:16-21** and again in **Numbers 16:2-7, 17-21, 35**. The censers were used as a test of who had the right to enter the Temple of God and "come near to God" – entering the Most Holy Place. We can connect this back to the Garden easily – Nadab, Abihu, and the rebels of Korah were destroyed by FIRE, right? What was in front of the Garden of Eden, preventing access to the Holy Place? **Genesis 3:24. An angel with a sword made of fire!**

So it's a sentry to prevent unauthorized access to God. It is a nightclub bouncer. A customs officer. The presidential secret service. But it works another way, as well – it offers *protection to those who are qualified to enter!*

This incense Aaron burns PROTECTS him. Without it, when he enters the Holy of Holies, he would die. Why? **Exodus 25:22**. Could Aaron look at God and live? **Exodus 33:18-20**. Did Paul see God clearly? **1 Corinthians 13:12**. Paul saw God as if he were in a fogged up glass. Or as if he were across a smoky room!

We've discussed many times how deception and grace work, so I won't repeat that here. The smoke from the incense both identifies Aaron, and protects him once he enters, by preventing him from seeing God clearly. God is what? **1 John 1:5**. Where does God live? **1 Kings 8:12**.

The golden censer burns incense, and the incense creates smoke; the smoke shrouds the throne of God so that we perceive Him only as "through a glass, darkly". It symbolizes the darkness of our minds which prevents us from seeing God and protects us from His immediate wrathful judgment – God has shrouded our minds in ignorance "that we die not".

But what exactly does the smoke represent? If clouding up God's presence so you couldn't see Him was all that mattered, ANY incense would do. Moldy sticks, pine needles, an old water bottle – anything would create smoke enough to hide God. But only ONE type of smoke keeps from you from being killed. Why?

Grace covers sins of which you were unaware. But you can be unaware of something, and hence receive grace, for two reasons: ignorance, or deception. Ignorance is simply not knowing. You are ignorant of more things than you can imagine right now – as am I. God doesn't care about that *provided* we are actively trying to learn more.

But deception comes from someone lying to you. Someone *deliberately* hiding you from God. When Satan lied to you, this clouded up God's throne room to you. It protected you from seeing Him, yes – but in the worst way possible, by telling you He is different than He really is. So how will the Devil be destroyed? **Ezekiel 28:18**.

Notice that is the *same exact way* as Nadab and Abihu were killed! For the same reason – they thought they knew better than God, and were more holy than Him – so they became a noxious smoke to God! (**Isaiah 65:5**).

So how does this apply to the human pattern? What is our golden censer? We can't walk to heaven. First, it's a long walk; second, we're not really sure where it is. So we are transported there in spirit – we make a trans-universal phone call. Collect. How does God describe that action? **Psalms 141:2**.

Note that, contrary to what everyone else believes, the smoke is *not* the prayers of the saints. The *incense* is the prayers, which **CREATES** the smoke. The smoke is the deception or ignorance *that accompanied* the prayer!

Think about it – if an angel is pictured by the flame at the top of the candle, the flame produces smoke; smoke (air, spirit) ascends up to heaven. Which is what **Judges 13:20** said. That doesn't mean the smoke IS the prayer, *it means the smoke is the spirit of the angel who CARRIES the message!*

In **Revelation 8:3-4**, the angel was given a golden censer full of incense. He then placed the censer WITH the prayers of all God's people on the altar, and then the prayers AND the smoke ascended to the throne of God!

But do everyone's prayers get to God? **Proverbs 28:9**. So God screens His calls, and some – most – never actually reach Him. *Because the angel in front of the throne room turns them away!* Do angels and devils have a list of people on God's "friends and family plan"? Those whose calls He doesn't screen out? **Acts 19:15**. So the angel still guards the gate to the heavenly Eden!

Most of the world does not have direct access to God – yet He has left a way for the sincere, yet massively deceived, false Christians of the world to still reach Him. The angels of their churches, if they think it is a problem above their pay grade, can pass it up the chain of command.

And the fact that it is being done *indirectly*, through an intermediary, *clouds the issue and hides God from them!* And them from God! Think about the odd phrasing of **Acts 10:1-4**. His prayer "came up before God". The man was a Gentile, and prayed "always", but only NOW his prayer actually made it to the top of the pile on God's desk. Why?

Because it took a while for a Gentile's prayer to make it through the chain of angels! Whereas Daniel's prayer was heard "*from the first day*" (**Daniel 10:12**), and we are supposed to be heard "*while we are still speaking*" (**Isaiah 65:24**).

God simply doesn't have any reason to listen to pagans in the world as a rule – after all, "*his ear is far from the wicked*" (**Proverbs 15:29**). The angels of those churches judge most of the issues; they are supposed to judge righteous judgment, not bounce every minor problem up to God.

Of course, once a person is called by God, as Cornelius was, all of that changes. God no longer deals with men only through angels, but hears them directly. But for most of the world, they need that incense – and the smoke – to cloud up the throne room before they enter. Do we? **Hebrews 4:16**.

GOLDEN CANDLESTICK

Across from the table of showbread there was a candlestick with seven branches. Contrary to what everyone believes, it was not an eternal flame. Was it? **1 Samuel 3:3**. When was it lit? **Exodus 30:8**. Did the Temple have windows? **1 Kings 6:4**. So naturally, it didn't need a candle in the daytime – only at night. To those who believe it never was extinguished, why did it need snuffers? **Exodus 37:23**.

So what does this candlestick represent in heaven? **Revelation 4:5**. This is one of the easiest layers to connect. And there are a TON of places we can take that understanding, in fact the next lesson is entirely devoted to it. So for now, I'll just mention things that won't be in that lesson.

We have explained two of the five layers right there; in Eden and the Holy City these seven spirits of God were certainly present as well, so that's all that needs said about that. In the human body, however, we can afford to spend a moment.

What is our path like? **Proverbs 4:18**. So then do we have a candle in us? **Matthew 5:15-16**. What are we to do to darkness? **Ephesians 5:8, 11, 13**. So just as the candle chases darkness out of the Temple, our good works will chase darkness out of, not just our own bodies, but the bodies of others as well? **1 John 1:7**.

And so YOU have a candle within YOU, that chases darkness out of the church – just as every member of the church has a candle in THEM to chase darkness out of YOU! Which of course ties into many scriptures like **Proverbs 27:17**. But if the LIGHT that is in us turns to darkness, then what happens? **Matthew 6:22-23**. What happens if our candle goes out? **Revelation 2:5**.

If that which is supposed to be LIGHT in you, that which is SUPPOSED to correct your sins and keep you trained in the way you should go, if even THAT is darkness... how GREAT is that darkness in the body of Christ – or even in your own body!

THE OIL

As I said, these symbols are all perfect, flawless in their detail. What does the candle burn? **Exodus 27:20**. Everyone believes this represents the holy spirit. They're wrong. We already have two symbols for the spirits of God – water, and air. Oil has a different meaning.

When oil is mentioned in the Bible it *always* means olive oil unless specifically excepted (**Esther 2:12** for instance). So what we're really asking is what does *olive oil* represent. To answer that, we have to back up to the symbolism of the olive *tree*. What does an olive tree represent? **Psalms 52:8**. This was a prophecy of Christ speaking about the judgment of Satan (compare the rest of the Psalm to **Isaiah 14**).

So Jesus is “*like a green olive tree*”. But is Jesus alone in that olive tree? **Romans 11:17**. This is referring to the nation of Israel, and Gentiles being grafted into that tree – adopted as spiritual Israelites (**verse 24**). What does the root of this tree represent? **Verse 16**.

The first and second halves of this verse are comparing two different symbols picturing the same meaning. The firstfruit, or starter culture of the bread, is the same as the root; and the lump of dough that grows from it is the same as the branches. Now compare that to the parable in **John 15:1, 5, 8**.

Putting this all together, the root and trunk are Jesus; the branches would be the twelve apostles/tribes, and then the fruit would be the people they help to join the family of God. The Father is the owner of the farm, the one who planted the “root and the branch” (**Isaiah 11:1, Revelation 22:16**).

Back to some of our earlier metaphors, the water represents spirit of the Father; the trees that grow take their life from the Father/husbandman; the branches that are grafted on grow fruit, which in turn creates new trees. The end result of the process that began with the Father is what? **John 15:16**.

So looking at it a different way, the trees are essentially factories that convert the spirit of the Father into fruits. So the root and trunk of the olive tree are Jesus, who gets the spirit from His Father, and passes it on to His branches – the apostles, and the rest of the true Christians. And the FRUITS of those branches – the fruits of those Christians – is the oil.

When you back up and think about this question in a fresh light, it's rather obvious in retrospect – **what does an olive tree do? It converts water into oil.** Some fertilizer and air is used of course, but the vast, vast majority of any plant's consumption, by weight, is water.

And what does this olive oil do? **Leviticus 24:2.** The olive oil causes the lamp to burn within the tabernacle. This brings light into the dark tabernacle. Now can it be an accident that it is OUR FRUITS which are the light of the world? **Matthew 5:16.**

WE provide the oil that burns in that lamp! Yes, we get the source for our power from the Father, through Christ, but ultimately it is OUR FRUITS that light the candle of the church of God! The world sees our light from the burning of **our** oil and glorifies God BECAUSE OF OUR GOOD WORKS! Just as was said in **John 15:8:** *"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit".*

Now what did the olive tree *say* his oil was good for? **Judges 9:9.** This clearly says that men give honor to God by the oil of olive trees; the Bible never says the sacrifices give honor to God. Only the oil. And the only thing YOU can do to give honor to God is to OBEY Him; again, your fruits are what honors God (**Psalms 50:23**).

God's holy spirit is the energy; the energy is then transformed into oil; and the oil feeds the flame of the candles in the Temple of God to create the light of the world. This transformation takes place in us. We can specifically prove that certain saints provide the oil for the lamp by simply reading **Zechariah 4:11-14.**

So these two witnesses, two of the (many) branches of the tree which collectively are the church of God, are bringing forth much fruit, which means they have much oil; and the oil flows FROM these two witnesses, who are branches OF the olive tree, and the oil is used to BURN in the candle that is God's church (**Revelation 1:20**), and PROVIDE the light of the world. By the actions of these two witnesses, the entire church burns brighter for a time.

Again, as an example of the fun things we can do with knowledge like this, oil is what burns in our lamps. And when you have an oil fire, can you put it out with water? No! Water only makes the oil fire spread. It jumps from place to place, splatters, and becomes even larger than before!

So also, if you drop either of the holy spirits (water or air) on a fire of our fruits (oil), it cannot extinguish it; it only makes it grow, splatter, jump, and become more powerful than before! How then can you extinguish our light, the light of the world?

Well, how can you put out an oil fire? Baking soda! **LEAVENING!** And so if you want to put out a fire in the church of God, if you want to stymie the fruits of active Christians, you must LEAVEN them with sin! Only sin can put out the fire of the light of the world! Which is the only way Balaam was able to curse Israel (**Revelation 2:14**). He had to get them to sin first, then God Himself would curse them!

At the risk of repeating myself, when you understand God's plan well enough, and understand the world He created, you will find there is no metaphor that doesn't make sense, no matter how far you push it. As David said...

Psalms 19:7-8 *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.*

As one final example of that principle, Solomon put an unusual restriction on the contractors building the Temple in **1 Kings 6:7**. No tools were to be used to work the stone on the property (and the building was made of stone!). Remember, WE are the Temple. So this means that no tool of metal was used on US at our construction site.

A great deal goes into the production of even a human person, much less a spiritual one. **Psalms 139:13-16** describes some of this, and in the process, gives us a peek into the book of life – where “our members were written” before they even existed. And yet none of that is visible.

God’s hand is not miraculously present with us when we are born, nor is He visibly guiding us on our journey. There may at times be tens of thousands of angels in sight of us, each doing their part to further our development, but not a sound of that great host is heard while we are being built!

To all outward appearances, we are indeed a temple of stone *cut without hands* (**Daniel 2:45, Mark 14:58, Colossians 2:11**). Even though massive amounts of work are being performed 24 hours a day by invisible workers, there is no noise and no sign of progress – except the progress ppitself.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

God never wanted the Levitical system, or its trappings. He made it so that carnal people would have access to something that *represented* the pure, spiritual things, without putting carnal people in risk of death by actually SEEING the pure, spiritual things and rejecting them. This explains why God reacted so violently in **1 Samuel 6:19**.

No carnal man can look on God and live. And so when they opened the Ark, they saw inside symbols which directly represented God and Jesus and the firstborn, and they died on the spot. The Ark was covered when it was transported, **and not even the high priest was ever permitted to look inside it**. Regular priests could only see the Ark under a covering when it was transported, they were not even allowed to see God “*through a glass, darkly*”, for their own protection: **2 Corinthians 3:14-16**.

But when Christ died, the veil that protected the Holy of Holies – and the Ark of the Covenant with it was torn! The Ark represented the heart of man, and when the veil was torn at the death of Christ, that veil was symbolically opened, and the New Covenant was officially proclaimed. Man now had DIRECT access to the throne room of God, and could go before the mercy seat PERSONALLY. Man hadn’t been able to do this since the Garden of Eden!

And, by the same token, under the terms of this covenant, God now had direct access to the human heart, and could access it and tweak it and make it feel guilty at will, without stubbornness or selfishness preventing Him! It was now a two-way street, and **these symbols show us how God must access our heart in order for us to access His Temple!**

When Adam was in the midst of the Garden of Eden, he was there with the River of Life, the Tree of Life, and the priesthood. **In a sense, he was walking inside the Ark!** But when man sinned, he was thrown from the Garden, and the VEIL was erected around the Garden, preventing sinful man from seeing the Ark ever again, and fencing him out of the Holy of Holies!

The veil had to be created at man’s first sin, but it will disappear as soon as man’s heart is circumcised. Because the foreskin of the heart is PICTURED by the veil! So when that protective shell around the

heart is removed, naturally the veil that pictures it will ALSO be removed! The true home for all these symbols, the only one God ever wanted, was for them to dwell in our hearts!

We aren't supposed to merely have the Ten Commandments written on our walls, but in our HEARTS! Just as it was in the Ark, in the Garden, in the Holy City, and in God's throne in heaven! And we aren't supposed to merely worship Jesus, but have His spirit – His own conscience – in the midst of our hearts! **(Ephesians 3:17).**

Just as He was in the midst of the Garden of Eden! Just as He stands at the right hand of God in heaven **(Acts 7:54-55)**. And just as the Tree of Life grew beside the River of Life, and just as the manna that fell in the wilderness was secured in the heart of the Ark of the Covenant, so also we must have Christ IN us, our hope of Glory **(Colossians 1:27)** – just as the conscience of God was in Adam's and Eve's hearts before their sins chased it out.

As it stands now, Christ isn't in the hearts of most men! And the law certainly isn't written there! And so they have no right to be determining right and wrong for themselves! Yet they perpetuate the sin of Adam every moment of every day by continuing to blindly guess at right and wrong for themselves!

God has always wanted to write His law on the hearts of men: "*After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people*" **(Jeremiah 31:33)**. That's what He wanted from the beginning! **To transplant the contents of the Ark INTO the heart of man!**

But their heart was uncircumcised, and hardened, so that God could not get to it. The veil was locked, and they refused to give God the key because they didn't want Him there! They didn't want God in their hearts – they wanted MOSES to tell them the law **(Exodus 20:19)**.

They wanted Him to write it on stone, so that they could observe it outwardly! So God had Moses store all the writings of the Old Covenant (but NOT the Ten Commandments) in a chamber OUTside the Ark **(Deuteronomy 31:26)**, just as the Old Covenant was stored OUTside their hearts!

Outside the Ark, in the flesh, all those laws apply. But inside the Ark, in the spirit, there should only be three things. The law, the water of life – the spirit of the Father. The bread of life – the spirit of Christ. And the almond branch.

I've hinted at it, but I haven't come out and said it yet – the almond tree represents *all the spirits of just men made perfect*. In the world to come, the Father will rule, Jesus will be the high priest, and all the church of God saved from this time will be "*an holy nation, a royal priesthood*" **(1 Peter 2:9)**. And what is a royal priesthood if not "*kings and priests*" who shall "*reign on the Earth*" **(Revelation 5:10)**?

The almond branch cut from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil has been given to Jesus, giving Him the right of the priesthood. He in turn will pass it on to us, when we have qualified ourselves to exercise the knowledge of good and evil for ourselves. We will be Tree of Life, with the authority of the knowledge of good and evil in our hands.

And then the world will have, not only the holy spirits of God and Christ, but also the holy spirits of all the saints helping to guide the people of the second resurrection into salvation, and bearing twelve tribes of fruit – each of whom will in turn be planted alongside the River of Life and add the beauty of

their own spirit to the “*river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out from the throne of God*”
(Revelation 22:1).