

Dr. John Oswalt, Kings, Session 7, 1 Kings 6-7

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Well, it's great to see each of you tonight. Thanks for coming. And we're looking at a big chunk of scripture here, chapters 6 and 7. As the background says, there are those who would argue that the temple is the central theme of 1 and 2 Kings, given the extensive treatment of it here, right at the beginning.

Then, there is the treatment of Joash's rebuilding, Josiah's rebuilding, the recovery of the Book of the Law there, and Hezekiah's centralizing worship there. I wouldn't deny the importance of the temple in the book, but I would suggest that, in fact, the point that's being made is the secondariness of the temple. The temple is not central.

What is central is the heart attitude that the temple is supposed to represent. With that devotion, then the temple is a wonderful blessing. But without it, God really doesn't care about the building at all.

And as I say, the contempt that Yahweh has for these symbols when we try to use them to actually insulate ourselves from Him is almost unspeakable. I just today had reason to refer to the first chapter of Isaiah and mention to students that for about 50 years, I've been challenging seminary students sometimes to use Isaiah chapter 1 verses 10 and following as a call to worship in their churches. I don't think anybody ever has.

I haven't heard about any pastor being run out after the invocation. But the language is just thick. God says, hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom.

That would get people's attention, right, to begin with, wouldn't it? Listen to the instruction of our God, you people of Gomorrah. The multitude of your sacrifices, what are they to me, says the Lord? I have more than enough burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fattened animals. I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

When you come to appear before me, who asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? Wouldn't that be great? Good morning. Who asked you people to come in here anyhow? Stop bringing meaningless offerings. Your incense is detestable to me.

New moon, Sabbaths, and convocations, I can't bear solemn assembly and iniquity. So, is the temple important in the book? Absolutely. But is it the central theme? I don't think so.

The central theme is covenant devotion to God, which is demonstrated in the way we treat other people. If that's happening, if we are truly devoted to him, if we are exclusively devoted to him, and we're showing it in our behavior, then the symbols are a wonderful, important thing. They're a way of making visible and physical something that is deeply spiritual.

But without the spiritual reality, God has no use whatsoever for the symbols. We're told in chapter 6, verse 1, that the temple was built in the 480th year after the departure from Egypt. I, for one, tend to take that literally.

But it has to be said, there's a little bit of a question because 480 is the result of multiplying 12 times 40. Two perfect numbers, if you will. Two numbers symbolizing completeness and totality.

And so, it's a little neat to have 480 years. And if I get to heaven and discover it wasn't literally so, I'm not leaving. But if we take it at face value, this would say that the exodus occurred in the 1440s B.C. because we are confident that the temple was built sometime in the 960s B.C. The cherubim are not fat little angels with bows and arrows.

They're probably sphinxes. They're probably the front quarters of a lion, the hind quarters of an ox, the head of a human being, and the wings of an eagle. This is what you find both in Egypt and in Assyria as the guards to the palace doors.

It's also interesting that the same combination of figures are the beings that Ezekiel sees with four faces. The face of a man, the face of an eagle, the face of an ox, the face of a lion. So, once again, as I want to say a little bit more about in a few minutes, these are figures that would be well known to the people as guardian angels, as guard forces, so protecting the covenant there in the box.

One more word. I don't know about you, but as a child, I always wondered why there was a boat in the temple—the Ark of the Covenant.

But in fact, ark is a 1611 word meaning box. Noah went to sea in a box. And so, this is, it just doesn't sound very holy to say the covenant box, but that's what it is.

It's a covenant box. And the cherubim there are guarding the covenant that is inside the box. Here is one representation of the temple.

We do not have all the dimensional data to construct it precisely as it was, but this is probably pretty good in terms of what was involved. Now, this layout—an outer courtyard, a porch, an inner main room, and then a small innermost room—is typical of Canaanite temples all through this region. You can find it replicated again and again.

Furthermore, the decorations that are described here, the cherubim, the palm trees, the pomegranates, and the lilies, are decorations that are known from other Canaanite temples. So, the question is, what's going on here? Is this a Canaanite temple or not? Is it an Israelite temple or not? What do you think? Both? Okay, all right, all right. You can be my straight man anytime.

No, it does not. In the Canaanite temples, in the innermost room was an idol. What this building was the idol god's palace.

So, you had a table in there for the idol god to eat from. You had a lampstand so the idol god wouldn't feel bad in the dark. This was the idol god's palace.

By that one dramatic difference, not an idol, but a box, that changes everything. This is precisely what we find as God's principle of revelation, and it is the principle of incarnation. The incarnation of Christ was not an innovation.

It, in fact, is what God had been doing from the beginning. God incarnates himself in our human experience. God takes on earthly forms and uses those forms insofar as possible, but transforming them.

And that's been true right across through the history of the church. The song that we sang this evening is a good example of that, where a music form that was popular here in America came to be used to express what was a much more staid hymn when it came from Isaac Watts Penn. Now, that always has a problem.

It is dangerous because it's possible that the form will overwhelm the content. I think it's not impossible that there were Israelites who came to this gorgeous temple complex and thought in pagan terms. This is Yahweh's house, and I can do nice things for Yahweh, and Yahweh will do nice things for me.

I can manipulate him. So, God takes a terrible risk in using our human forms to try to convey something else. But I've said this to many students across a lot of years, God is very economical.

So, why should he start something new if he can use something old and transform it? If he can use something that is familiar to people. The rainbow. Yes, he can use something that we are familiar with.

He's done that in using human language. Human language has incredible problems. And God is willing to run the risk.

And in the same way, he was willing to run the terrible risk of becoming one of us. This is exactly what the early church struggles were all about. Well, he couldn't be human.

He's God. So, it wasn't really him that died on the cross. I mean, he's God.

When he walked down the road, he didn't leave a shadow behind. Or, he's human. God created this human and sort of bestowed divinity upon him.

And the early church councils struggled. And they finally decided he's 100%. 100% God and 100% human.

And 100% plus 100% is 100%. Explain that, please. Well, no.

But there's the terrific risk that God is involved. And that's our problem with the music wars today. A modern young generation looks at the kind of music I love, hymns, and says Christianity is old, slow, and out of date.

They see those forms and draw some, I think, erroneous conclusions from the forms. So, they want a form that really speaks to the heart. A form that really moves you.

One of my colleagues at the seminary, his mother, loved southern gospel music. And her word was, if it can't move your foot, it can't move your heart. Well, but there we are.

And so, God is using a form that is quite intelligible to these people. This is what a holy temple ought to look like. But with all the dangers that are resident there.

And so, again and again, we've got to ask ourselves, is the form overwhelming the content? Just because most of you here are my age, I can talk to you, and you won't throw things at me. But I look at a lot of modern Christian music and don't see participation. I see a sing-along performance.

That says something to me about the Christian faith that I don't quite want to buy. I like four-part harmony with a music director who's not terribly visible. Now, that's me talking, simply trying to illustrate my point here.

For me, the form is overcoming the content, and that's not necessarily a good thing. But as I say, God is using what is immediately intelligible, what is immediately familiar to them, and running the risk that they might draw some wrong conclusions from that. But he's willing to run that risk in order to communicate.

When we compare this building to the archaeological remains of Canaanite temples, it is much squarer and much more symmetrical. What do you think about that? Why

might that be the case? The other buildings tended to be not square and not symmetrical. Yeah, right, some modern architecture, yes, yes.

All right, the tabernacle gives us the same kinds of things. It is the length, and the width are proportional to one another. The inner room is perfectly square, same dimensions on all four sides.

Yeah, so it reflects that. So that then takes us back farther. Why was the tabernacle symmetrical and square? A God of decency and order who operates in an orderly fashion.

David, you were going to say something. Yeah, yeah. Yes, in Revelation 21, a city was built in four squares.

Yes, yes, I think this is right. I certainly can't prove it, and I don't know that I've seen anybody else discuss it. But I think this is precisely the point that in God's world, there is discernible cause, there's discernible effect.

Everything is in order. Everything is in balance. Everything is on purpose.

So, I think that, indeed, this is, once again, he's taking a form, but he's doing something with it. He's putting it into a more if I dare say it, perfect shape as a reflection of his own nature and his character. Now, it's interesting if you look, and when we were going through this section in the New Living Bible, we had some very fun descriptions or discussions about, well, just exactly what is this saying here? Because that was always our discussion: What is the Hebrew saying? And we would have a long, long discussion about this, the four or five of us Hebrew guys.

And when we're done, the English stylist would say, what is it saying? And we would say, well, it's saying this. He'd say, well, this is the way you say it in English. So, what's it saying? What is this business about? There were no beams going into the wall.

Pretty clearly, if you look at a cross-section of the side walls, they were stepped like that. The building was on the side, and then the roof beam was laid there. And the roof beam was laid there.

And the top roof beam would also be. So, no beam pierced the walls. We not only have that said, there were no hammering sounds.

What's the point of this? Nothing to disturb God. I think that's right. I think that's right.

There's nothing to intrude physically. And there's nothing to intrude aurally, a-u-r-l-a-l. Nothing impinges upon him, upon his perfection, upon his absoluteness.

So, the stones were all cut and quarried about 40 miles away, we think. And then brought to the site, all evidently numbered, marked, laid in place. So, no hammering, no chiseling.

But I think that's exactly the point. Nothing intrudes upon God. Nothing intrudes upon him, upon his serenity, upon his shalom.

The shalom that he would give to the world. We've already talked about this a bit, but I want to push it a bit further. 619, he prepared the inner sanctuary within the temple to set the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord there.

Now, as I said, in every other temple, the whole focus is upon the idol who stands there in the holy place. The Parthenon in Athens. There was a huge, huge statue of the Virgin Athena who stood there.

In that case, it was wide open. It is not cut off, but there it is. So, as I said, this is the temple of the God or the goddess.

What does it mean that there is no idol here? What does it say about God? He can't be contained in anything that a human being would build. Mm-hmm. What else? He's not made.

You cannot make God. He's the maker. That, of course, is right through the Bible.

The sort of the most dripping mockery of idolatry is you made that God with your own hands. I've never forgotten once when I was in India, I was walking down the street, and I think I literally did a double take. I think I walked by and looked, and then there was a man making idols.

The idol was of the elephant God. I forgot what his name was, but they were about that size, and he had them in all stages. Some were you still had the form.

He hadn't covered it with clay or stucco yet. Others, he had them covered but not painted. Some were half painted, and some were finished.

And I thought you made it. That's God? Now, I know what they would say. Oh, it's not God yet.

You have to have it dedicated, and all that other stuff, and then God will move in. But still, over and over again, the Bible will say, you made this with your hands? No, no, no, no. He made you.

He's the maker, not you. He's the creator, not you. All right, good.

What else does the absence of an idol say about Israel's understanding of God? Right, right. He can't be housed in a building. He can't be housed in creation, either.

He is other than this world. You can't look upon him. Once again, we are creatures, and we cannot look upon the Creator.

He is, his presence is such that he would fry us alive. I've, again, Karen has heard me say this a number of times, but I'm so fascinated by two experiences in the Bible where people are said to have seen God. The first was in Exodus.

After the covenant is sealed in chapter 24, the elders are invited partway up onto the mountain to have a meal with God. And the text actually says they saw him face to face. 10 chapters later, God tells Moses, you can't see my face and live.

So, I'm guessing that what they saw was not actually his face but a representation. But at any rate, it says the pavement under their feet was like heaven for blueness. So, I see these guys coming, drifting down off the mountain, and the people say, what happened to you? We saw God.

Oh, really? What'd he look like? You should have seen the pavement under his feet. It was like heaven. Well, okay.

What'd his feet look like? You should have seen that pavement. It was amazing. How about the soles of his shoes? You should have seen that pavement.

Oh, words stop at the pavement. The same thing happened many years later: Isaiah came floating out of the temple. I just saw God.

Oh, wow. What'd he look like? You should have seen the hem of his garment. It filled the temple.

Okay. What did the garment look like? You should have seen that hem. I mean, there's nothing like it in the world.

Oh, you mean words stop at the hem. Yeah. Yeah.

He cannot be seen. He cannot be contained in the human mind. What else does no idol say to us? He is mysterious.

We cannot know him. In the sense, again, of an idol is quite comprehensible. So what's happening here is we've got a completely different understanding of the world.

In paganism, god is part of this world. The god is the world. And here, this one book alone, this one alone says he is not the world.

Carl Sagan, the cosmologist who now is dead and knows better, said very, very bluntly, get it through your heads. This cosmos is all there is. There is nothing beyond this cosmos.

And I wonder if Moses greeted him on the other side. But there it is. You see, these people were not stupid primitives who couldn't think like we can.

We're in the very same position. This world is all there is, baby. There ain't no more.

Excuse the bad grammar. This is it. No, this is not it.

This is not all there is. There is one who is beyond us, beyond the world. And that simple difference, not an idol, but a box, and I want to talk more about the box later, is a 180-degree different view of reality.

I'm tempted to park here and get into some fairly abstruse stuff, but you don't need that tonight. So, here's the building, according to the text, completely lined with gold inside. Cedar walls overlaid with gold.

Unbelievable. And yet, as I said last week, Solomon was in a position to get that kind of cash, controlling the two trade routes between Egypt and Mesopotamia, between the Red Sea and Greece. Canaan is right on the hinge between three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe.

So, although it seems, as we look at the text, impossible, there's every reason to believe that it was indeed quite possible. We have these fascinating descriptions of the sea. Pagans believed that the sea was eternal.

It was chaos, watery chaos that had always existed. The gods came out of the sea and eventually decided to use the sea, this chaos, to make a world. The result was pretty ugly.

Interesting that this should be called the sea as merely a part of God's complex. The furniture inside, three pieces, a lamp stand. And again, we have in Roman stuff, the picture of the candelabra that was captured from the candelabrum.

I need to get my grammar right here. And with seven pieces. Originally, we don't know exactly what the one in the temple looked like, but the one in the tabernacle was a tree.

It was an almond tree made of gold with limbs. And on those limbs at the end were almond buds. And on those buds rested a lamp.

Now, looking down at the top of the lamp in Old Testament times, it looks like that. It was a flat dish with the rim curled in and a lip. And you put olive oil in there and put a wick and you lit the wick.

And so those lamps sat on it. So, it was a lamp stand. Probably, that was still the case in Solomon's temple.

As the Roman reliefs show us, it was not the case in Herod's temple. You had, in fact, this candelabrum that held not lamps but candles, evidently. Again, interesting questions.

Interestingly, by the New Testament times, the rim had been closed all the way in. And you had a hole there for putting the oil in. And you had another hole here for the wick.

These are the kinds of lamps the ten virgins would have been carrying for the wedding ceremony. And so, you needed oil because the wick was going to burn up the oil in your lamp. And as a child, I always figured they were lanterns like my dad carried to the barn.

But no, they were lamps like that. The history of that rim getting bigger and bigger and bigger until it finally closes it all in is interesting. You can date lamps very, very easily by the succession.

So, you have the lampstand, you have the table, and you have the altar of incense. I'll say more about those in a few minutes and their significance. I want to look now at what comes next.

Chapter 6, verse 38, In the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, the eighth month, the temple was finished, in all its details, according to its specifications. He had spent seven years building it. Now, in chapter 7, verse 1, It took Solomon thirteen years, however, to complete the construction of his palace.

He built the palace of the forest of Lebanon. Verse 7, he built the throne hall, the hall of justice. Verse 8, and the palace in which he was to live.

He also made a palace like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married. Seven years for the temple, 13 years for his palace. What does that say to you? It's pretty obvious, isn't it? He honored himself more than God.

Now we do not know exactly what the layout was. I've got a suggested layout here that I'll show you in just a moment. But what he was actually building, as I suggested to you in the opening slide, was a royal complex.

The temple was just a part of this massive construction. This demonstrated to the world who Yahweh was and who Solomon was equally. So, the question that has to be asked is, in my religion, who is important? Now again, I don't want to be unkind to Solomon or untrue to the scripture.

As we'll see next week, his prayer of dedication is a wonderful thing. So, it's not, and this again is part of the glory of the Bible. It's not an open or shut case. It's not black or white, it's mixed.

So, what does this say about Solomon's religion? Was it sincere or not? All right, all right. Perhaps it is waning. Okay, okay.

Yes, yes. Okay, okay, okay. I like that language.

He got caught up and caught up in what? All right, all right. And of course, the number frightens us a bit.

But also to be seen for God, of course. Yes, yes, yes. Yes, I think that's very much the case.

God is blessing me, so why shouldn't I? And as I said last week, the point is that just because you can doesn't mean you should. Yes, yes, I've got gold running out my ears. I've used it all over the temple and everywhere else.

What am I going to do with the rest of it? Well, I guess I'll build myself a palace. Caught up. I have the feeling that the paganism of these wives was infectious.

Yes, because paganism says I can manipulate God. I can get what I want from God. I can do religious things, and God will bless me.

Yes, we've all heard versions of the Behind Every Great Man is a Great Woman pushing. So, yes, I think that's what we're seeing. And that's really what I'm talking to you and me about.

What am I getting caught up in? What is a potential to lead me astray? Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, not me, not me. But compromise a little here, a little there. And the day comes when you've lost the vision.

Yes, comparison and competitiveness. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm, I'm the wisest man in the world. I'm the richest man in the world.

Why shouldn't I demonstrate it? Right, yes, yes, yes. In Samuel, it's clear that God didn't intend for them to have a king. Now, in Deuteronomy, he gives laws in case they should, but it's not his plan.

And when they do say, we want to be like the other nations, as I shared last week, Samuel says, well, then this is what you're going to get. You want a king like the other nations, and you'll get a king like the other nations. Oh, not me, not me.

So, the question is always, not how close to the edge can I live and not fall off? The question always has to be, how close can I live to Jesus? Not how little like him can I be and still go to heaven, but how much like him can I be? Charles Wesley said, help me. The first approach is to feel pride or a wrong desire to quench the kindling fire. Solomon didn't do it.

No, you really don't. Again and again, there are so many lessons here of that fine line between real devotion to Jesus and lip service. And in the beginning, it's like the continental divide.

Two drops of water fall, one will end up in the Pacific and the other will end up in the Atlantic. So, this is the picture that we see here. Now, before we go further there, I want to go back and talk about the temple's symbolism.

There, at the front, there is no remission of sin apart from the shedding of blood. Sin is real. It has consequences.

It is deadly. And if I have sinned, somebody's got to die. If not me, then the sheep.

And God is waiting for Micah to come along and say, now, wait a minute, wait a minute. Can a sheep die for my sins? Answer: no. My own son couldn't die for my sins.

So, God, what's this all about? God says, hang on, you'll find out. Then the laver. Two beautiful statements in the New Testament.

One in Ephesians 5.26. He will make his church holy by the washing of water by the word. You take a shower in the morning, ought to wash in this too. Before you go into the holy place, be washed.

And then we are saved through the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit. The priests have to wash before they enter the holy place. Who washes us? Who's washing me, you? Then we go in; there's the lampstand.

Oh, well, we've got to give God light. No, no, no. I am the light of the world.

Well, we've got to give the God lunch. No, no. I am the bread of life and the altar, the altar of incense.

Revelation tells us the prayers of the saints rise with the incense. At the altar, day and night, burning. We have instant, instant access to the blood of the lamb, the washing of the Holy Spirit, bread, and the light.

We have instant access to him. Then what about this covenant box? The box that is in the holy place. As we've already said, it represents a completely different worldview in place of the idol.

God is not this world, and he's not part of this world. You can't represent him by anything in this world, and you cannot manipulate him through this world.

What good is it having a God if you can't make him do what you want? What good is it having a God if you can't use him or her to get good stuff? But there it is. So, what's this box about? A box with stones in it. Now, we're told that in the Tabernacle, there was a bowl of manna beside it, and the staff that Aaron held blossomed to prove that he was the high priest and not Korah or Dathan.

The reference that we find later on makes no mention. It's mentioned in Hebrews. Hebrews says the manna and the staff were in the box.

Well, the box was only three feet long. So, I doubt if the staff was ever in the box, but two stones in that box. And every year, the high priest sprinkled blood on the lid.

Now, the term to cover is kaphar, K-A-P-H-A-R. That means literally to cover. It also means figuratively to cover.

Same verb. So, in English, the King James translators, I think they were responsible for it. Maybe Coverdale did, I don't know.

But they hit upon this created word to atone for our sins. To make us at one with God. It's a created word with that idea, but it's the same verb.

And the word lid or cover, the cover, a noun. So, the high priest sprinkled blood on the lid every year. Well, when Luther was translating Hebrew into German, the first translation of Hebrew into another language in 1300 years, he came across this word, and he said, that's the place of atonement.

And so, he came up with the word, the German term that is translated into English, the mercy seat, the place of covering. So, it's a wonderful double entendre. It's the cover where sins get covered.

Now, what's going on? God says I will meet you over the box. The box that has the cherubim casts right into the gold of the lid. Here are the tablets of the covenant.

The covenant that is broken and broken. And that covenant cries out to God and says, God, you've got to destroy them. You've got to kill them, God.

They swore in blood that they were going to keep me. They said, may God strike us dead if we ever break one of these commandments. They've broken hundreds of them, God.

If you're just, you've got to destroy them. God says I don't want to destroy you. I'll make a way.

Sprinkle the blood on the lid. And when I see the blood, I will forgive. So, this is not about manipulating a God.

This is about God having done something in time and space. It reminds them that God has acted in our world. Not in never, never world.

Not in some unchanging, invisible world where everything happens and conditions everything we do. No, here in our world. And he acted.

And he saved us from bondage. He called us into an exclusive relationship with him, in which we replicate his character. I want you to be mine.

Mine alone. And being mine, I want you to look like me. Okay? And they say, sure.

Not knowing about the fifth column within us, which says, oh, I want God's blessings, but I want my way. God says, I understand about that. And I will make a way.

I will make a way so that my justice will not destroy you as we walk. So, he meets us there. I will speak with you from above that box.

That speaking is made possible by the blood of the lamb. That relationship, that ongoing relationship, becomes possible. So, he meets us in that context of a faithful life lived in response to his grace.

It's not grace that makes it possible for us to live an unfaithful life, but it's grace that makes it possible to live a faithful life. And all this is pointing forward to a day when that room will no longer be closed off. The day the veil will be torn in two and we have access to him through the blood of the lamb.

Yes, I do remember them, yes. That's the cosmos. That's everything created.

In the worldview of paganism, this is all there is. There is nothing more. In this cosmos, there are three realms.

There is the realm of humanity. There's the realm of nature. And there's the realm of deity.

These are all intertwined. This is a two-dimensional drawing, so I can't really get that point across very well. But they're completely intertwined.

So, these boundaries are permeable. So, this means that whatever I do, if I do it right, is automatically reproduced in the divine world. And what happens in the divine world is automatically reproduced in nature.

Or what I do to nature can be reproduced in the divine world. This is the worldview of continuity. Everything in the universe is continuous with everything else.

There are no boundaries. So, there are no boundaries between a man and his wife. So, in Ephesus, the bride spent her wedding night with a priest.

There's no boundary around marriage. There's no boundary between a human and a cow. So, in Canaanite rituals, bestiality was a part of it.

It was a religious statement. Homosexuality is part of it. There are no boundaries.

Incest is part of it. So, when you read Leviticus 18 and 20 and see the long list of, you shall not do this. You shall not have sex with your daughter.

You shall not have sex with your mother-in-law. You shall not have sex with a cow. You shall not have sex with another man.

We say, good grief, God's really hung up here. No, he's saying a very strange thing. There are boundaries in this world.

So, it's not raining. I'm a Canaanite farmer. I desperately need rain.

I don't have a big river like the Nile or the Euphrates to get irrigation water. I've got to have that storm coming off the Mediterranean, and it's not happening. Obviously, the sky God and the earth mother are on the outs.

So, what am I going to do? Well, I'm going to go down the road to my local priestess. She's already identified with the goddess. I do a ritual so that I can identify with God.

We jump in bed together. What happens? The God and the goddess jump in bed together. What happens? The sky impregnates the earth.

If you think about this long enough, you will never walk in the rain again. That's the worldview of continuity. So, the best expression of this idea is the idol.

A God made of stone or wood in a human form. Over against that is this thing. It's the only place in the world where this other point of view is taught.

It is the worldview of transcendence. God is not the cosmos. He is outside of the cosmos.

He is other than this world. This is not God. This is not God.

And this is not God. He is beyond anything we know or understand or can grasp. And so, there is a hard and fast boundary.

We cannot go up into heaven and bring him down. Remember a guy saying that in the New Testament? And in the same way, there is a hard and fast boundary between us and nature. Now, this is really increasingly unpopular in our culture.

No, no, no, no. We are just chimps with clothes on. We have this strange capacity for language, but animals communicate for pity's sake.

In Genesis 1, create appears three times. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Verse 22, God created the great sea monsters.

That's an in-your-face for the pagans. In the beginning were sea monsters, out of which we all came. God says, no, no.

Way down in the process, he created the sea monsters. One other time, he created them, male and female. The other five times that create appears in the book of Genesis are all human beings.

We are a different order of being. So, don't you dare have sex with a cow. Not because it's nasty, which it is.

It's a theological statement. It is a damnable theological statement. But, though we cannot cross this boundary, he can and does.

He can cross it whenever he chooses, without losing his otherness. Without losing his holiness. Not having an idol in the temple.

There it is. Now, precisely, precisely, precisely. If you didn't know better, you would think the Bible was inspired.

What's Genesis 3 all about? I will decide what is right and wrong. It's as simple as that. Nobody's going to tell me the conditions of my life.

I will decide what the conditions are. Sorry, honey, that won't work. So, yeah, absolutely, absolutely.

It's all about boundaries. And God's right to say, this is good, and that is evil. Good is the way God made the world.

Evil is anything that is contrary to the way he made the world. Okay, it's all her fault. Let me just show you this last, is that graphic or not? Look at the size of the temple and look at everything else.

The forest of Lebanon would have been the armory where he hung all his gold shields. The throne room is there. Try not to hang myself up on the cords here.

This is the accessway, the hall of pillars. Solomon's house and Pharaoh's daughter's house until he finally built her one on Mount Olivet. Now, again, this is speculation.

We don't have the precise dimensions of all of that, but it makes all kinds of sense in terms of what is described and what is the dimensions we do have. So, yeah, this is why I said at the outset, it's a royal complex. The temple is simply part of the royal complex.