

Dr. Dave Mathewson, The Storyline of the Bible, Session 5, Acts and Pauline Epistles Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Mathewson, The Storyline of the Bible, Session 5, Acts and Pauline Epistles, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture excerpt from Dave Mathewson's "Storyline of the Bible" series explores how five key biblical themes—**land, covenant, temple, people of God, and kingship**—unfold through Paul's epistles. Mathewson argues that these themes, originating in Genesis, find their **inaugurated fulfillment in Christ and his followers**, the church, with a **consummated fulfillment anticipated in Revelation**. The lecture uses Acts as a bridge, showing how its narrative continues the story from Genesis, highlighting the restoration of Israel and the spread of the gospel. Finally, it examines how Paul's writings demonstrate the ongoing fulfillment of these themes, emphasizing the **inclusion of Gentiles into God's people and the establishment of a new covenant**.

2. 25 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, The Storyline of the Bible, Session 5 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Introduction & Languages → Introductory Series → Storyline).



Mathewson_Storyline_Session05.mp3

3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided lecture excerpts on "Mathewson StoryLine Of the Bible Lecture 5 – Acts & Paul":

Briefing Document: The Storyline of the Bible in Acts and Paul

Overview: This lecture explores how the major themes present in the Old Testament and fulfilled in Jesus Christ continue to surface and develop throughout the New Testament, specifically in the book of Acts and the writings of Paul. The lecture emphasizes the interconnectedness of these themes and their progression from inauguration to consummation. The five recurring themes are:

1. **People of God:** The community of those who belong to God.
2. **Covenant:** The agreement between God and His people.
3. **Temple:** The place of God's dwelling with his people
4. **Kingship:** God's rule and authority, and the role of His appointed leaders
5. **Creation/Land:** God's original intention for the world, including his people's dwelling place

Key Distinctions: The lecture establishes two critical distinctions for understanding the fulfillment of these themes:

1. **Fulfillment in Christ vs. Fulfillment in God's People:** These themes are initially and primarily fulfilled in Jesus Christ. They are then secondarily fulfilled in those who belong to Him through faith (the Church).
 - Quote: "First of all, they get fulfilled in Christ, and secondarily, they get fulfilled in God's people who belong to him."
1. **Inaugurated vs. Consummated Fulfillment:** The fulfillment is not fully realized in the present. It is partly inaugurated with the coming of Christ and the Church, but it will be fully consummated at the end of history, particularly at Christ's second coming and the new creation.
 - Quote: "The inaugurated fulfillment of these promises and of these themes and the consummated fulfillment."

The Book of Acts:

- **Continuation of the Story:** The book of Acts is not simply the beginning of the church. Rather, it is a continuation of the story that started in Genesis and carries on through the Gospels. The book assumes the ongoing unfolding of God's redemptive plan
- Quote: "They assume the continuation of the story that starts back in Genesis, goes through the New Testament, into the life of Christ, and now continues to weave its way through the rest of the New Testament authors."
- **Acts 1:8 as a Programmatic Statement:** Acts 1:8 is more than a missionary strategy; it echoes Isaiah's prophecies of restoration. The promise to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth reflects Isaiah's vision of restored Israel.
- Quote: "Acts 1, verse 8, actually, all those phrases resonate with texts from the book of Isaiah... Isaiah's promise of restoration is now seen as beginning to be fulfilled in the Book of Acts"
- **Restoration of Israel:** The inclusion of Samaria alongside Jerusalem symbolizes the restoration of the divided kingdom and signifies the restoration of Israel as a whole.
- Quote: "Jerusalem, the capital of the southern kingdom, and now Samaria, the northern kingdom of Israel, are being united and restored in fulfillment of the prophetic expectation."
- **The Significance of the Twelve Apostles:** The appointment of a twelfth disciple in Acts 1 is essential because it represents the restoration of the people of God, mirroring the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Quote: "The reason they needed 12 disciples or 12 apostles was because that was emblematic of the 12 tribes of Israel or the people of God."
- **Pentecost and New Covenant/Temple Imagery:** The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost fulfills the promise of the new covenant (Ezekiel 36-37) and signals God's presence residing in His people, the temple (Greg Beal). This event also is considered by Richard Baucom, not so much the birthday of the church, but the beginning of the restoration of the diaspora

- Quote: "The gift of the Holy Spirit is a sign that God's new covenant has come upon His people...the pouring out of the Spirit on the people at the day of Pentecost suggests God's presence coming to reside and rest in His temple."
- **Growth of the Church:** The repeated mention of the church increasing in number reflects God's original intention for humanity in Genesis 1:28 to be fruitful and multiply.
- **Mission to the Ends of the Earth:** The book of Acts ends with the gospel reaching Rome, demonstrating the spread of God's kingdom to the ends of the earth, in fulfillment of God's purpose.
- Quote: "So what's going on in Acts again is, in the first couple of chapters, the people of God, Israel, is being restored...now that that has taken place, salvation can go to the ends of the earth"

Paul's Writings:

- **Focus on the "Already":** Paul's letters primarily focus on the "already" aspect of the themes, particularly as they are fulfilled in the church, while acknowledging the ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ.
- **People of God and the New Covenant:** The Church participates in promises made to Israel through the New Covenant. All of the blessings of salvation for Christians flow from the New Covenant
- Quote: "All of the promises of salvation that God's people enjoy, that Christians participate in, are linked inextricably to the New Covenant."
- Salvation is tied to the New Covenant and the blessings of the Holy Spirit.
- The uniting of Jew and Gentile in the church fulfills Isaiah's promises. Membership in God's people is no longer based on ethnicity but on faith in Christ (Ephesians 2).
- Quote: "The uniting of Jew and Gentile into one new humanity...is seen as the fulfillment of God's promises given to Isaiah."
- The church is seen through the lens of a "new exodus" from sin and death (1 Corinthians 5, Colossians 1, Galatians 4).
- **Covenant/New Covenant Themes:** Paul's references to the Holy Spirit consistently assume the establishment of the new covenant.

- Forgiveness of sins is tied with the new covenant from prophets like Ezekiel
- The ministry is connected to the new covenant (2 Corinthians 3). The new covenant is not of the letter, but of the spirit.
- Quote: "Our competence is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of the new covenant, not of letter, but of spirit."
- **Kingship/Davidic Kingdom:** Jesus is identified as a descendant of David (Romans 1:3), fulfilling the promise of a Davidic king.
- Paul frequently connects Christ's exaltation to the right hand of God with Psalm 110, and with all things under his feet in fulfillment of Psalm 8.
- Jesus Christ is the true image of God, fulfilling humanity's original purpose (Colossians 1), and is seen as the "new Adam."
- God's people share in Christ's rule and are being renewed in His image (Colossians 3:10)
- Christians are "seated with Christ" in the heavenly places, participating in his authority (Ephesians 2).
- Quote: "He raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places."
- **Temple:** Paul sees the people themselves (the church) as the temple of God, where the Spirit dwells.
- Quote: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16)
- The purity of the church is essential because it is the new temple.
- God's people are being built together into a dwelling place for God through his spirit (Ephesians 2: 19-22)
- Quote: "In him, the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord...you are also built together spiritually into a dwelling place of God."
- **Creation/Land:** The "land" is initially fulfilled in the blessings of salvation and inheriting the kingdom of God.
- The "fruit of the Spirit" is seen as the fruit of the new creation.
- Christians participate in the new creation by being "in Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

- Quote: "So, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. Behold, everything has passed away, and see, everything has become new."
- God's people are also described as a new creation created in Christ for good works (Ephesians 2).
- **Not Yet/Consummated Eschatology** There are hints of the "not yet," where all things will be summed up in Christ and restored to God's original intention (Ephesians 1:10).

Conclusion: Paul's writings articulate that the promise of the restoration of people, which originated in Genesis, and the Old Testament story, has now begun. Through Christ, all of these key redemptive themes are in the process of being realized. The people of God have been restored, a new covenant has been established, God dwells with his people, the Davidic King is reigning, and the new creation has been inaugurated. This is all accomplished in Christ and experienced by his people, awaiting full realization at the end of time.

This briefing document provides a framework for understanding the significant themes explored in the lecture and should facilitate a deeper engagement with the book of Acts and the letters of Paul.

4. Mathewson, The Storyline of the Bible, Session 5, Acts and Pauline Epistles

Storyline of the Bible: Acts and Paul

Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each, based on the source material.

1. According to the lecture, what are the five interrelated themes that form the Storyline of the Bible?
2. What two sets of distinctions are crucial for understanding how the storyline gets fulfilled?
3. How does Acts 1:8 relate to Isaiah's promise of restoration, according to the lecture?
4. Why was it important for the early church to select a twelfth disciple, according to the lecture?
5. What does the pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost signify in relation to the Old Testament, as explained in the lecture?
6. According to the lecture, how is the church described in Ephesians 2 in relation to the promises of Israel?
7. How does Paul use the theme of the Exodus to describe the church in his letters, according to the lecture?
8. What is the significance of Jesus being described as the "image of the invisible God" in Colossians 1, according to the lecture?
9. How does Paul describe the relationship between the temple and the church in his writings, according to the lecture?
10. How does Paul connect the concept of the "new creation" with the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the believers, according to the lecture?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The five interrelated themes are: the people of God, covenant, creation and land, temple, and kingship. These themes are the underlying narrative through which God's redemptive work is understood.

2. The two sets of distinctions are: (1) fulfillment in Christ and fulfillment in God's people; and (2) the inaugurated fulfillment and the consummated fulfillment of the promises. These distinctions clarify how the storyline unfolds over time.
3. Acts 1:8 is a response to the disciples' questions about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, linking the spread of the gospel to the fulfillment of Isaiah's promise, not just a strategy for evangelism, but a theological declaration that begins restoration.
4. The selection of the twelfth disciple was important because the number twelve is emblematic of the twelve tribes of Israel and the people of God, symbolizing the restoration of the people of God and establishing the foundation of the new church.
5. The pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost signifies the beginning of the new covenant, as prophesied in the Old Testament (e.g., Ezekiel) and the presence of God coming to reside in His people. It also begins the restoration of the diaspora.
6. In Ephesians 2, Paul describes the church, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, as the fulfillment of God's promises of restoration from Isaiah, creating one new humanity in Christ. This signifies a people of God that transcends ethnic lines.
7. Paul uses the theme of the Exodus to describe the church's deliverance from sin and death through Christ, seeing Jesus as the Passover Lamb and the church as a new people being rescued and redeemed, with a focus on freedom and adoption.
8. The phrase signifies that Jesus is the true representation of God, the one through whom all of creation was made, and the one who now rules over it as the sovereign creator in fulfillment of the original intention of God for man.
9. Paul describes the church as the temple of God, where God now dwells through His Holy Spirit. This is a metaphorical shift, making the people themselves the building blocks of the temple rather than a physical structure.
10. Paul links the new creation to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, stating that the new creation has been inaugurated in him, and believers share in this new creation by being united with him, experiencing new life in the present and looking to future consummation.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Choose one of the following questions to explore in an essay format. Your essay should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the provided source material.

1. How do the five themes of the Storyline of the Bible (people, covenant, land, temple, kingship) evolve from the Old Testament to the New Testament, as presented in the lecture on Acts and Paul? How are these themes inaugurated and how will they be consummated?
2. Analyze how the book of Acts functions as a bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul, focusing on the continuity of the biblical storyline in each.
3. Explore the significance of the New Covenant in Paul's theology, explaining how he uses this concept to understand salvation and the identity of God's people.
4. Compare and contrast the roles of Jesus as the “new Adam” and the “Davidic king” in Paul’s letters, explaining how each relates to the overarching themes of restoration and new creation.
5. Discuss the temple theme in Paul’s writings, including why it is not a physical building, what it does represent, and the implications for how Christians understand themselves and their relationship with God.

Glossary

Consummated Fulfillment: The final and complete fulfillment of God's promises and purposes at the end of time, often associated with the second coming of Christ.

Covenant: A sacred agreement or promise between God and His people, often establishing specific obligations and blessings. A new covenant promises a changed heart, and God dwelling within his people.

Diaspora: The dispersion of the Jewish people beyond their homeland, particularly their scattering after the Babylonian exile. The church is said to be a restoration of the people from this exile.

Eschatology: The study of "last things," or the end times, including events like the second coming of Christ, resurrection, and the new creation. Inaugurated eschatology refers to the present reality of some aspects of God's plan. Consummated eschatology refers to the future fulfillment of God's plan.

Exodus: The biblical event of the Israelites' liberation from slavery in Egypt, a pivotal event in the Old Testament that serves as a paradigm for redemption and a type of the salvation to come through Christ.

Inaugurated Fulfillment: The initial and present realization of God's promises and purposes through Christ and the church, although not yet in their full and final form.

Kingship: The concept of God's rule and reign over creation and his people. It is seen in the rule of David over Israel, in Christ's role as a Davidic king, and in the future reign of Christ over all the earth.

New Creation: The concept of the restoration of all things to their original perfect state, often associated with the resurrection and the final consummation.

People of God: The community of believers chosen and set apart by God, including Israel in the Old Testament and the church in the New Testament. The people of God are the subject of God's covenants and the place of his dwelling.

Temple: The dwelling place of God, both in the physical structures of the Old Testament and the metaphorical understanding of the church as the temple of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. God dwells within his people by his Spirit.

5. FAQs on Mathewson, The Storyline of the Bible, Session 5, Acts and Pauline Epistles, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What are the five main themes that the lecture series identifies as central to the "Storyline of the Bible," and how do these themes develop through the Old Testament?**
- The lecture series highlights five interconnected themes that form the core of the biblical narrative: the people of God, covenant, creation and land, temple, and kingship. In the Old Testament, the people of God are initially the Israelites, bound to God through covenants such as those with Abraham and Moses. The theme of land centers on the promise of the Promised Land. The temple becomes God's dwelling place among his people, and the theme of kingship evolves through figures like David, representing God's rule. These themes develop through stories, laws, and prophecies throughout the Old Testament.
- **How does the New Testament, particularly the Gospels, present the culmination and fulfillment of these five themes?**
- The New Testament, particularly the Gospels, reveals Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of these five themes. Jesus embodies the true people of God, being the Son of God. He inaugurates a new covenant through his sacrifice. He embodies the new creation and is the true king, fulfilling Davidic prophecy. Jesus is described as the new temple where God dwells. These themes are fulfilled through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
- **According to the lecture, what is the difference between the "inaugurated" and "consummated" fulfillment of these themes?**
- The lecture draws a distinction between the "inaugurated" and "consummated" fulfillment of the five themes. The "inaugurated" fulfillment refers to the initial, present-day realization of these themes through Christ and the Church. This is the "already" aspect, while the "consummated" fulfillment looks to a future reality, the "not yet," when these themes will reach their ultimate expression at the end of history, particularly at the second coming of Christ and in the new creation detailed in Revelation 21-22.

- **How does the book of Acts continue to develop the storyline and its themes after the Gospels, and what does Acts 1:8 signify in this context?**

The book of Acts serves as a continuation of the storyline from the Gospels. While the book doesn't always explicitly isolate the five themes, it assumes their importance. Acts 1:8, where Jesus commissions his followers to be his witnesses, signifies the start of Isaiah's promise of restoration being fulfilled. This restoration includes not only Jerusalem, but also Samaria. The gift of the Holy Spirit, the witness theme, and reaching to the ends of the earth all tie back to Old Testament promises, signaling that the church is God's restored people, tasked with spreading his kingdom. The growth of the church is a continuation of God's mandate from Genesis 1 and 2.

- **How does Paul's understanding of the church, as described in Ephesians 2, relate to the restoration of the people of God, and what does he mean by a "new humanity"?** Paul's understanding of the church is central to his theology and is closely tied to the restoration of the people of God. In Ephesians 2, Paul emphasizes that through Christ, both Jews and Gentiles are united into one "new humanity" (a new creation, according to Isaiah). This new humanity is founded on faith in Jesus and is no longer defined by ethnic or cultural lines. This concept means God's people are expanded beyond the nation of Israel, embracing all who believe in Christ.
- **How does Paul connect the church with the themes of the New Exodus and New Covenant?**
- Paul connects the church with the themes of the New Exodus and New Covenant to emphasize that God's redemptive work in Christ is a new and greater deliverance. Paul sees the church's salvation and identity as a new exodus where people are rescued from sin and brought into the kingdom of God. Also, the presence and work of the Holy Spirit are presented as evidence of the establishment of the New Covenant, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies. He applies Exodus imagery, such as the Passover Lamb, to Christ, suggesting that Christ is the true deliverer. The gift of the Spirit and the forgiveness of sins are emphasized as hallmarks of this New Covenant.

- **How does Paul understand the theme of kingship, particularly in relation to Jesus and the church, and how does that tie back to creation in Genesis?**
- Paul understands the theme of kingship as fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who is both the descendant of David and the true ruler over all creation, thereby fulfilling the Davidic covenant and the initial mandate given in Genesis 1 and 2. Paul connects Jesus' exaltation to the right hand of God to the promises of kingship in Psalm 110 and Psalm 8. This is the fulfillment of God's intention to rule over creation through a vice-regent. He also views the church as participating in this kingship, sharing in the rule and authority that has been given to Christ. By being united to Christ, the true image of God, the church also is renewed in that image, restoring the intention for humanity in Genesis 1 and 2.
- **According to the lecture, how does the theme of the temple get reinterpreted by Paul and what role do concepts such as “new creation” and “inheritance” play in the Pauline Epistles?**
- Paul reinterprets the theme of the temple by applying it not to a physical building but to the community of believers, the church. He sees the people themselves as the new temple where God dwells through the Holy Spirit. The idea of the new creation, originating in Isaiah 65, is presented as already underway in Christ and in the lives of believers. Paul uses the concept of "inheritance" initially related to the Promised Land, now applied to the blessings of salvation and the kingdom of God. These concepts emphasize that in Christ, the promises of the Old Testament reach their present-day fulfillment, where God's presence, blessing, and new creation are available to his people. The consummated aspect remains a future hope.