

Dr. Dave Mathewson, New Testament Theology, Session 8, Temple (Rev. 21-22) Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 8, Temple (Rev. 21-22), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Mathewson's lecture explores the concept of the temple in Revelation 21-22, arguing that the New Jerusalem fulfills the temple theme. The lecture highlights how John's vision contrasts with Old Testament and Jewish expectations of a physical temple. **Instead, John sees God and the Lamb as the temple, with the entire city embodying temple imagery, signifying God's presence with His people.** The lecture suggests that the New Jerusalem is the ultimate realization of God's dwelling with humanity, rendering a separate temple unnecessary. **The lecture will then transition into discussion of the covenants in the Old and New Testament.** Mathewson will be looking at what the covenants are, and how many there may be. **The main focus in this lecture will be how the covenants relate to each other and develop throughout history.**

2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 8 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → NT Introduction → NT Theology).



**Mathewson_NTThe
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3. Briefing Document: Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 8, Temple (Rev. 21-22)

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. David Mathewson's lecture on the Temple in Revelation 21-22 and an introduction to the concept of covenants:

Briefing Document: Temple in Revelation 21-22 and Introduction to Covenant Theology

I. Main Themes:

- **Fulfillment of the Temple Theme:** The lecture focuses on how the temple theme, prominent in the Old Testament and Jewish thought, finds its ultimate fulfillment in Revelation 21-22 with the New Jerusalem.
- **God's Dwelling with His People:** The core idea is that the temple was always meant to point towards God's direct presence and dwelling with His people.
- **The New Jerusalem as the New Temple:** In the New Jerusalem, there is no separate physical temple building because God Himself (the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb) *is* the temple. Furthermore, the *entire* New Jerusalem becomes a temple, with temple imagery superimposed upon it.
- **Continuity and Discontinuity:** While there's no physical temple in the New Jerusalem, the lecture emphasizes the continuity of the temple *theme* and its ultimate realization. It also acknowledges a *discontinuity* in that the physical structure is no longer needed.
- **Covenant Theology as a Framework:** An introduction to the concept of covenant theology as the fundamental structure to explain God's relationship with His people is introduced in the second half of the document, including the idea of God as King adopting people as his children.

II. Key Ideas and Facts:

- **Revelation 21-22 and the Absence of a Physical Temple:** John's vision in Revelation 21-22 depicts a new creation and the New Jerusalem. Crucially, John states, "I did not see a temple in the city" (Revelation 21:22). This is striking because it contrasts with Old Testament prophecies (especially Ezekiel 40-48) and common Jewish expectations of a restored temple in a renewed Jerusalem.

- **God and the Lamb as the Temple:** The absence of a physical temple is explained by the statement that "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple." This signifies God's direct and immediate presence with His people.
- **Temple Imagery Applied to the New Jerusalem:** Despite the lack of a physical structure, temple imagery from Ezekiel 40-48 and other Old Testament sources is applied to the entire New Jerusalem. This transforms the city into a temple.
- **The New Jerusalem as the People of God:** Dr. Mathewson suggests the New Jerusalem primarily refers to the people of God, making them the dwelling place/temple for God.
- **Specific Examples of Temple Imagery: New Covenant Formula:** Revelation 21:3 echoes the New Covenant formula from Ezekiel 37 and Leviticus 26 ("God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God."). This formula in the Old Testament often precedes descriptions of the temple.
- **Ezekiel 40-48:** John draws heavily from Ezekiel 40-48, which describes a rebuilt temple, but applies the imagery to the New Jerusalem itself.
- **Measurement:** In Ezekiel, the *temple* is measured. In Revelation, the *city* is measured.
- **River of Life:** In Ezekiel, the river of life flows from the *temple*. In Revelation, it flows from the *throne*.
- **Shape:** The New Jerusalem is described as being "four square", the same word used in the Septuagint translation of Ezekiel describing the Altar.
- **Precious Stones:** The foundations of the city are decorated with precious stones that are associated with the stones on the high priest's breastplate (Exodus 28), linking the New Jerusalem to priestly functions and the Garden of Eden.
- **Gold:** The city is primarily made of gold, reminiscent of the extensive use of gold in the construction of the tabernacle and temple (1 Kings 6). Gold is also associated with the Garden of Eden.
- **Cube Shape:** The city is cube-shaped, similar to the Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:20). This symbolizes that the entire New Jerusalem is the Holy of Holies.

- **Priestly Function:** The people of God serve Him, see His face, and have His name on their foreheads, echoing the role of priests in the Old Testament.
- **God as Light:** God Himself provides light, eliminating the need for the lamp that illuminated the temple.
- **Fulfillment of God's Original Intention:** The New Jerusalem represents the fulfillment of God's original intention for creation (Genesis 1-2), where God dwelled with humanity in Eden.
- **Removal of Sin:** The absence of a separate temple is also linked to the removal of sin and the old creation, which necessitated the temple in the first place. "The very thing that required a tabernacle and temple, the first creation, and sin and evil, has now been removed so that there's no longer a need for a separate temple or tabernacle."
- **Rebuilt Temple in the Future?** Dr. Mathewson suggests while a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem is *possible*, it might not be significant for biblical prophecy as the temple's purpose is already fulfilled in Christ and the New Jerusalem.
- **Introduction to Covenant Theology:** Covenants in the Bible define the legal framework between God and His people, confirmed by an oath. God initiates the covenant, adopting people as His children. A covenant contains stipulations/obligations, and blessings/curses for adherence or failure. The formula "I will be their God, and they will be my people" summarizes the core of the covenant relationship.

III. Key Quotes:

- "I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple." (Revelation 21:22)
- "God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God." (Revelation 21:3)
- "Now the entire New Jerusalem is a sanctuary temple garden where God dwells with His people in fulfillment of Genesis 1 and 2, the tabernacle and temple, and the prophetic expectation, such as Ezekiel chapters 40 through 48."
- "Scripture testifies to one constant relationship between God and His people throughout redemptive history that is formalized and embodied in its successive covenants."

IV. Implications:

- The lecture provides a rich understanding of how the temple theme develops throughout the Bible, culminating in the New Jerusalem.
- It challenges traditional interpretations that emphasize a future, physical temple in Jerusalem.
- It emphasizes God's desire for direct and intimate fellowship with His people, fulfilled in Christ and the New Creation.
- It sets the stage for exploring the various covenants in the Old Testament and their fulfillment in the New Testament.

4. Study Guide: Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 8, Temple (Rev. 21-22)

Temple & Covenant in Revelation Study Guide

Quiz:

1. According to Revelation 21:22, why is there no temple in the New Jerusalem?
2. How does John utilize Ezekiel 40-48 in his description of the New Jerusalem?
3. What is the significance of the precious stones in the foundations of the New Jerusalem's walls?
4. What is the significance of gold as the predominant metal in the New Jerusalem?
5. What is the shape of the New Jerusalem, and what Old Testament structure does it recall?
6. How does Revelation 22:3-4 describe the function of God's people in the New Jerusalem, and how does this relate to the Old Testament temple?
7. In Revelation 22:5, why is there no need for a lamp in the New Jerusalem?
8. According to the lecture, what was the purpose of the original tabernacle and temple?
9. What is a covenant, and what are its key components?
10. According to the lecture, what is the relationship between God and His people at the heart of a covenant?

Quiz Answer Key:

1. There is no temple in the New Jerusalem because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The temple's purpose of anticipating and pointing to God's dwelling with his people is now a reality.
2. John utilizes Ezekiel 40-48, which describes a restored temple, but applies it to the entire New Jerusalem city instead of a separate temple structure. This indicates that the whole city is now a temple.
3. The precious stones in the foundations of the New Jerusalem are meant to represent the stones on the breastplate of the high priest, connecting the city to

the priestly function and the Garden of Eden, suggesting the priestly function of the New Jerusalem.

4. The prevalence of gold connects the New Jerusalem to the Old Testament temple, which was heavily adorned with gold, and the Garden of Eden, which is the original temple sanctuary.
5. The New Jerusalem is cube-shaped, recalling the shape of the Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:20), signifying that the entire city is a holy of holies.
6. God's people will serve Him, see His face, and have His name on their foreheads, indicating they function as priests, directly serving God in His presence, as only select priests did in the Old Testament.
7. There is no need for a lamp because the Lord God Himself will give them light. God's glorious presence fills the New Jerusalem, replacing the need for an artificial light source.
8. The purpose of the original tabernacle and temple was to restrict God's presence as much as it made it available. The tabernacle and temple were necessary due to sin and evil, restricting God's presence and offering an avenue to reconcile with God.
9. A covenant is a formal declaration or agreement that determines the legal framework for a relationship between God and His people, usually confirmed by an oath. Key components include God's initiative, stipulations/obligations for maintaining the covenant, and blessings/curses based on obedience.
10. The relationship is summarized by the formula: "I will be their God, and they will be my people." God is seen as a king who enters into a relationship with His people by adopting the people as His children.

Essay Questions:

1. Discuss the significance of the absence of a physical temple in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21-22) in light of Old Testament expectations and Greco-Roman cultural norms. How does this absence redefine the concept of God's dwelling place?
2. Explore the ways in which John uses temple imagery from Ezekiel 40-48 and other Old Testament passages to describe the New Jerusalem. How does this imagery contribute to our understanding of the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament?
3. Analyze the relationship between the Garden of Eden, the Old Testament temple, and the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21-22. How do these spaces function as sanctuaries where God dwells with His people, and what continuities and discontinuities exist between them?
4. Explain the significance of the New Covenant formula (God's dwelling with His people) in Revelation 21:3. How does this formula relate to the Old Testament covenants, and what does it reveal about the nature of God's relationship with humanity?
5. Discuss the implications of the New Jerusalem being described as a cube, like the Holy of Holies in the Old Testament temple. How does this shape contribute to our understanding of the New Jerusalem as the ultimate dwelling place of God?

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **New Jerusalem:** The climactic vision of the final state of redemption, depicted in Revelation 21-22, where God dwells with His people.
- **Temple:** In the Old Testament, a physical structure in Jerusalem where God was believed to dwell; in the New Testament, often used metaphorically for Jesus, the church, or the New Jerusalem.
- **Ezekiel 40-48:** A section of the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel detailing a vision of a restored temple and its functions, which Revelation draws upon.
- **Covenant:** A formal agreement or declaration that determines the legal framework for a relationship, particularly between God and His people.
- **New Covenant:** A renewed agreement between God and humanity, prophesied in the Old Testament (Jeremiah 31), and realized in Jesus Christ, where God's law is written on the hearts of believers.
- **Holy of Holies:** The innermost sanctuary of the temple, believed to be the dwelling place of God, accessible only to the high priest.
- **Tabernacle:** A portable sanctuary used by the Israelites during their wilderness wanderings, serving as a precursor to the temple.
- **Garden of Eden:** The original paradise where God dwelt with humanity in perfect harmony, often seen as a prototype for the temple.
- **Septuagint:** The Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.
- **Dispensationalism:** A theological system that emphasizes distinct eras or "dispensations" in God's dealings with humanity, often highlighting discontinuities between the Old and New Testaments.
- **Covenant Theology:** A theological system that emphasizes the unity of God's covenant relationship with humanity throughout the Old and New Testaments, seeing more continuity than discontinuity.

5. FAQs on Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 8, Temple (Rev. 21-22), Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Temple in Revelation 21-22 and Covenant Theology: An FAQ

- **Why doesn't John see a temple in the New Jerusalem described in Revelation 21-22?**
- John states explicitly that he saw no temple in the New Jerusalem because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. This suggests that the presence of God is not confined to a physical structure but permeates the entire city, fulfilling what the temple was meant to anticipate: God dwelling directly with His people.
- **If there's no separate temple, how does John describe the New Jerusalem in terms of temple imagery?**
- Despite the absence of a separate temple structure, John uses extensive temple imagery to describe the New Jerusalem. He draws on Ezekiel 40-48 (which describes a rebuilt temple) but applies its features to the entire city, implying that the whole New Jerusalem functions as a temple where God resides. He applies the new covenant formula from Ezekiel 37 and Leviticus 26, which anticipated the establishment of the temple, to the description of the New Jerusalem. He also describes the city as being four-square like the altar in Ezekiel, overlaid with gold like the inner sanctuary, and founded on precious stones like the high priest's breastplate. These elements connect the New Jerusalem to both the temple and the Garden of Eden, emphasizing its role as a sanctuary.
- **What is the significance of the precious stones described in the foundations of the New Jerusalem's walls?**
- The precious stones are meant to represent the stones on the breastplate of the high priest (Exodus 28 and Ezekiel 26). This association suggests the priestly function of the New Jerusalem, implying that the people now function as priests of God in the New Jerusalem.

- **How does the use of gold in the New Jerusalem connect it to the temple and the Garden of Eden?**
- The prominence of gold in the New Jerusalem, such as the golden street and the city being made of pure gold, is a direct parallel to the extensive use of gold in the construction of the tabernacle and temple (1 Kings 6). Moreover, gold is also associated with the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:11-12). This links the New Jerusalem back to both the temple, which was meant to be a miniature Garden of Eden, and to God's original intention for creation as a place of His dwelling with His people. The New Jerusalem, therefore, becomes a temple garden, fulfilling these earlier models.
- **What does the cube shape of the New Jerusalem symbolize?**
- The cube shape of the New Jerusalem, with equal length, width, and height (Revelation 21:16), recalls the shape of the inner sanctuary (the Holy of Holies) in Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:20), which was also a cube. This implies that the entire New Jerusalem is a Holy of Holies, where God's presence dwells.
- **What is the role of covenants in understanding God's relationship with His people, and what are the essential elements of a covenant?**
- Covenants serve as the foundational structure explaining God's relationship with His people throughout the Bible. A covenant can be described as a formal declaration or agreement that determines the legal framework for a relationship between God and His people, usually confirmed by an oath. Essential elements include God's gracious initiative in providing for His people, stipulations or obligations for maintaining the covenant relationship, and blessings or curses depending on adherence to the covenant. Central to the covenant is the formula "I will be their God, and they will be my people."
- **What are the primary covenants in the Old Testament, and how do they relate to each other?**
- The primary covenants in the Old Testament are the Noahic Covenant (Genesis 9), the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12, 15, 17, 22), the Mosaic Covenant, and the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7). Scripture testifies to one constant relationship between God and His people throughout redemptive history that is formalized and embodied in its successive covenants.

- **Given that the New Jerusalem doesn't have a physical temple, should we still expect a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem according to biblical prophecy?**
- While it is possible that a temple might be rebuilt in Jerusalem in the future, it is not necessarily a significant event in terms of biblical prophecy. The function of the temple, which was to point to God's presence with His people and the extension of that presence to embrace the entire creation and the entire earth, has been fulfilled by Jesus Christ, His followers (the church), and ultimately in the New Jerusalem. Therefore, the reality to which the temple pointed has now arrived, rendering a physical temple unnecessary.