

Dr. Dave Mathewson, Storyline of the Bible, Session 4 - Jesus, Podcast Audio Overview

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All right. Welcome to a deep dive into the storyline of the Bible. Ooh.

We're going to be looking at a lecture by Dr. Dave Mathewson. Okay. And he makes this really interesting argument about Jesus being like the culmination of the Old Testament story.

Interesting. So he kind of breaks it down into these, like, big sweeping themes, you know, land, covenant, temple, God's people, and kingship. Right.

And then he kind of shows how all of those point to Jesus. Wow. That's pretty fascinating.

It is. It is. And what's really cool is that he's not just saying that Jesus continues the story, but that he's the climax.

Oh, wow. Like everything was leading up to this. Like from creation.

From creation. Yeah. Oh.

It's a pretty big claim. Yeah, it is a big claim. And he talks about this two-stage fulfillment.

Okay. First, in Jesus's life and teachings, and then a future complete fulfillment when Christ returns. Okay.

I like that. Yes. So let's jump into it.

The first theme is God's people. And Mathewson spends a lot of time unpacking the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew's gospel. Yeah.

What do you think about that? Like, why focus on genealogy? Well, I mean, genealogies, you know, at first glance, they seem kind of dry. Right. Right? Like, who wants to read through all those names? Exactly.

But they're actually super packed with meaning, and Mathewson points out that Matthew specifically mentions the exile of Israel multiple times within Jesus's lineage. Oh, wow. Yeah.

It's almost like this subtle reminder of Israel's history of displacement. Oh, that's interesting. You know, that longing for return.

Right. Right. Yeah.

So it's kind of setting the stage for Jesus as the one who will ultimately bring God's people back. Exactly. From exile.

Yeah, maybe from exile. Yeah. That makes sense.

Yeah. And then he goes on to talk about how Jesus actually challenges the Jewish leaders. Oh, interesting.

He even says that God could raise up children to Abraham from stones. Wow. Which is a pretty radical statement.

It is. I mean, he's basically saying that being part of God's people isn't just about physical lineage. Yeah.

Like it's about something more. Yeah. It's about something more.

Yeah. And it makes me think about how welcoming the Magi were to Jesus. Oh, yeah.

These Gentile astrologers, you know, who traveled from afar to worship him. Right. Even though they weren't part of, like, the traditional Jewish faith.

That's right. Yeah. It's like this redefinition of God's people is happening right there.

It's like it's unfolding. It is unfolding. Yeah.

Matthewson calls it the beginning of a new exodus with Jesus as the new deliverer. I like that. Yeah.

And he even points out how Matthew portrays Jesus as reliving these key moments of Israel's exodus story. So, like, the flight to Egypt and the return from Egypt. Yeah.

Mirroring the Israelites' journey. Wow. Okay.

Yeah. And Matthew even quotes Hosea 11.1 where God calls Israel, my son, out of Egypt. Right.

And he applies it to Jesus. Wow. It's very intentional.

It's this deliberate parallel to strengthen that idea that Jesus is fulfilling the destiny of Israel. So we've got Jesus as the new Moses leading a new exodus. Yeah.

Yeah. I like that. That's a cool thought.

Yeah. But Matthewson takes it a step further, right? He does. He connects this new exodus to the wilderness wanderings of the Israelites.

Yeah. He highlights how, just like the Israelites after their exodus, Jesus is led into the wilderness to be tested. Yeah.

It makes sense. And what's really fascinating is that Jesus' responses to Satan's temptations are all direct quotes from the book of Deuteronomy. Whoa.

Really? Yeah. The book focuses on Israel's wilderness journey. So it's not just a coincidence.

No. It's very intentional. Like he's drawing these very specific parallels.

Exactly. It's like every detail is meticulously crafted to draw these parallels. It's like Jesus is directly engaging with Israel's story.

That's a good way to put it. Picking up where they left off. Yeah.

Like he's finishing what they started. Right. Yeah.

Matthewson even links Jesus' wilderness temptation back to Adam and Eve. Oh, wow. In the garden.

Okay. Yeah. It's like he's saying that Jesus succeeds.

Where they failed. Where both the Israelites and the first humans failed. Wow.

He's fulfilling their purpose. He's overcoming their shortcomings. Yeah.

It really emphasizes how Jesus isn't just this new character in the story. Mm-hmm. He's like the one who brings the entire narrative to a head.

Yeah. He's central. Like he's the main point.

He is the main point. Yeah. But Matthewson doesn't stop there, right? No.

He keeps going. He connects the wilderness theme to the idea of kingship. He does.

He points out that Matthew consistently refers to Jesus as the son of David. Okay. And this title, it's not just a family title.

Right. It's loaded with this Old Testament significance. Yeah.

You know, it ties Jesus back to the promise of an eternal king. From David's line. Yes, from David's line.

That's from 2 Samuel 7. Yeah, exactly. Yeah. So it's like invoking this hope of a restored kingdom.

Mm-hmm. A king who will rule with justice and righteousness. Right.

But how does that connect back to the wilderness? Well, think about it. Okay. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness- 40 years.

For 40 years. Right. Before they entered the promised land.

Yeah. It was this time of testing and preparation- right. For them to be God's people in this land he'd promised them.

Ah. So Jesus, by undergoing his own wilderness experience- yeah. Is preparing himself for his role as king.

Yes. The one who will lead God's people. Into the fullness of their inheritance.

Exactly. Precisely. Okay.

I'm following you. Good. This kingship theme- yeah.

Is also connected to Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God. It is. Yeah.

Matthewson highlights a passage in Matthew 12- okay. Where Jesus casts out demons and declares that this very act signifies the arrival of God's kingdom. Oh.

The kingdom of God isn't some far-off future event. No. It's breaking into the present.

It's happening now. Yeah. It's confronting evil.

It's bringing God's reign to bear on the world right now. I completely agree. It's not just about a physical throne or political power.

Mm-mm. It's about God's power and authority being made manifest to the world through Jesus. Right.

It's like a whole different way of thinking about it. It changes the game. It does.

It changes the game completely. So we've seen how Matthewson connects Jesus to God's people and kingship. Right.

What about the temple? Okay. Yeah. I'm curious how he links that back to Jesus.

Well, he points out how Matthew's gospel- opens and closes- with references to God's presence dwelling with his people. Okay. In Matthew 1.23- Mm-hmm.

Jesus is called Emmanuel. Right. Which means God with us.

God with us. Exactly. Yeah.

And in the Great Commission- Mm. Jesus promises to be with his followers always. Okay.

So it's like Jesus himself is now the dwelling place of God's presence. Yes. Of God's presence.

That reminds me of how John's gospel uses language that evokes the presence of God dwelling in the tabernacle- right. And the temple. Yeah.

Yeah. Like those phrases: the word became flesh and dwelt among us. Oh, yeah.

Yeah. It connects Jesus to that same idea of God dwelling among his people. It does.

Yeah. It's not just a Matthew thing. Right.

It's this core concept throughout the New Testament. Yeah. The temple isn't a building anymore.

Right. It's Jesus. Yeah.

It's Jesus. Yeah. This changes everything.

It does. Like our understanding of what it means for God to be with his people. Right.

It's not this distant, far-off God. Yeah. It's this close, personal- intimate.

Intimate. Yeah. Connection.

Totally. And it leads us to that next theme, covenant. Okay.

Which is tied to God's people. Right. God is restoring his people.

Mm-hmm. There has to be this renewed covenant relationship. A new agreement.

A new way of relating to God. Exactly. And Matthewson points to Luke 22- yeah.

Where Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper to kind of highlight this. Jesus specifically describes the cup as the new covenant in my blood. Right.

His death isn't just this tragic event. It's the beginning of this new covenant. That was promised by the prophets.

Yeah. That was promised way back. And that new covenant- yeah.

Promised complete forgiveness of sin. Yes. A new heart.

Mm-hmm. And the ability to truly obey God. That's huge.

That's massive. Yeah. So Jesus isn't just dying.

He's doing something much bigger. He's establishing a new way for humanity to relate to God. Right.

A covenant based on grace and forgiveness. Made possible through his sacrifice. Yes.

Exactly. This is so rich. It's so layered.

That's beautiful. Okay. So we've covered four of the five themes.

Right. God's people, kingship, temple, and covenant. Okay.

What about land? Ah. Yeah. I know Matthewson acknowledges that this one's a bit trickier.

Yeah. There aren't a ton of explicit references to land in the gospels. It's true.

Yeah. But he argues that it's implied in the other themes we've discussed. Yeah.

He suggests that the land's ultimate fulfillment is found in Jesus. Oh, interesting. And ultimately in the new creation.

So rather than focusing on a specific physical location- it's about experiencing the blessings and promises of God's kingdom through a relationship with Jesus. Exactly. Okay.

And those blessings, they will ultimately find their full expression in the new creation. Oh. Okay.

But we'll have to wait till later to delve into that. All right. A little cliffhanger.

A little cliffhanger. I like it. All right.

Well, listeners, I hope you're as intrigued as I am by all these connections. We'll be back soon to continue our deep dive and see how these themes play out in the rest of the New Testament. Sounds good.

Welcome back to our deep dive. We're picking up right where we left off, talking about how Jesus fulfills the major storylines of the Bible. Yeah.

It's really fascinating stuff. It is. Right.

So last time we really focused on those key themes. Right. Land, covenant, temple, God's people, and kingship, and how they're kind of woven throughout the gospel.

Right. They're like a foundation. Yeah.

They set the stage. Yeah. But the story doesn't end there, does it? No, definitely not.

The rest of the New Testament kind of takes these themes and expands on them in really fascinating ways. Yeah. It's like those themes lay the groundwork, and then the letters and the other writings flesh them out and show us how they actually apply to the life of the church.

Right. Exactly. It's not just about Jesus himself.

It's about his followers, the church, being incorporated into him and participating in his mission. It's like we become part of the story. That's a good way to put it.

Yeah. Continuing the work that Jesus began. So how does that work in practice? What are some examples of these themes showing up in, say, Paul's letters? Okay.

Sure. Or other New Testament writings? Well, let's take the theme of God's people, for instance. Yes.

Okay. Remember how we talked about how Jesus was redefining what it meant to belong to God's people? Right. Right.

That idea really explodes in the book of Acts and Paul's letters. Yeah. You're right.

The early church is wrestling with the inclusion of Gentiles, people who weren't ethnically Jewish as full members of God's family. Yeah. There's all this tension and debate recorded in the New Testament about whether Gentiles need to follow Jewish law and customs.

Yeah. It's pretty intense. It was a huge shift in perspective, but they eventually came to understand that being a part of God's people wasn't based on ethnicity or following the law perfectly.

It was about being in Christ. Right. And that makes me think of that verse in Galatians 3.28. Oh, yeah.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Powerful. Paul really drives home that idea of unity and equality within the body of Christ.

It's really beautiful. It is beautiful. And that expansion of God's people is also deeply tied to the covenant theme, right? Yes, definitely.

The New Testament authors are constantly emphasizing that we are now under this new covenant established by Jesus' sacrifice. It's a whole new way of relating to God. It is.

The book of Hebrews, for example, goes into great detail about this new covenant. It does. It compares the old covenant based on the law with the new covenant based on grace.

Okay. It argues that Jesus is the ultimate high priest offering a perfect sacrifice that secures our forgiveness and access to God. So it's not about following all those rules and rituals anymore.

No. It's about having a relationship with God through Jesus. Exactly.

And this new covenant focuses on inward transformation. Yes. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live differently.

To live a life of love and obedience. Yes, exactly. And speaking of the Holy Spirit.

Okay. This brings us back to the temple theme. Right.

How could I forget? Remember how we talked about Jesus himself becoming the dwelling place of God's presence? Yes. Well, the New Testament says the Holy Spirit now engulfs believers, making each of us a temple of God. Wow.

That's pretty amazing when you think about it. It is amazing. The presence of God, which was once confined to a specific building.

Right. Now resides within every follower of Jesus. It completely changes the way we view ourselves and our bodies.

Yeah. 1 Corinthians 6:19 even says, Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? We become living sanctuaries carrying the essence of God within us. That's a powerful image.

It is. And with that realization comes responsibility. What do you mean? Well, our lives are no longer just about us.

Right. They're about reflecting God's presence and glory to the world. That connects to the kingship theme as well, right? Yes, that's absolutely.

We're not just subjects of God's kingdom. No, we're more than that. We are called to be ambassadors.

Right. Representing his rule and authority. In every area of life.

Yes. Everywhere we go. We're like little kings and queens.

I like that. Reflecting his glory. Yeah.

It's not about waiting for some future kingdom to come down. Right. We are called to be agents of that kingdom here and now.

Bringing those values into our homes, our workplaces, our communities. Yes. Into every aspect of our lives.

Everywhere we go. Colossians 1.13 even says that we've been rescued from the dominion of darkness. Okay.

And brought into the kingdom of the Son he loves. We're citizens of this new reality. Wow.

Living under a different set of values. All of this is incredibly inspiring. It is.

But it can also feel a bit overwhelming. I understand. How are we supposed to actually live this out? Right.

In our everyday lives? It's a good question. And the New Testament writers wrestle with that too. They give us practical guidance on everything from loving our enemies to managing our money to building strong communities.

So it's not just about these lofty theological concepts. No. Not at all.

It's about putting our faith into action. Exactly. And that's where that theme of land takes on a new dimension.

Right. Because we were saying that the land represents those blessings and promises of God's kingdom. Yes.

It's about experiencing that fullness of life that God intended for us. Not just inheriting a piece of property. Exactly.

And the New Testament says that this land isn't limited to a physical location. It's a spiritual reality that we can experience now as we follow Jesus. And allow his spirit to transform our hearts and minds.

So it's like we're cultivating our own little gardens of God's kingdom. I love that image. Within our lives.

Yeah. It captures what it means to live as citizens of God's kingdom. Yeah.

Embodying his presence and extending his reign into our world. Okay. So we've seen how those five key themes from the Old Testament find their fulfillment in Jesus.

Right. And continue to be explored in the New Testament. But Matthewson doesn't leave us there, does he? No.

He takes us even further. He points towards this future complete fulfillment of these themes. Yes.

In the new creation. Yes. It's where things get really mind-blowing.

Okay. When ready. Remember, the story isn't over yet.

What we see in Jesus and experience in the church today is just a preview. Oh, wow. So the already is just a taste of the not yet.

Exactly. That's amazing. And Matthewson says that the book of Revelation, specifically chapters 21 and 22, gives us a glimpse of what that ultimate fulfillment will look like.

I'm so curious. He argues that all five of our key themes come together in this grand finale that's almost too glorious to comprehend. Now I'm really intrigued.

I know, right? Well, I guess we'll have to save that deep dive into Revelation for next time. Yes, we will. But before we wrap up this part, I want to ask you: what stands out to you most about this idea of Jesus fulfilling the whole biblical story? You know, it's how it changes the way I see the whole Bible, both the Old and New Testaments.

It's not just a bunch of random texts. It's a unified narrative, a love story that reaches its climax in Jesus and invites us to participate in his redemptive work. That's powerful.

It's amazing to be a part of that. I totally agree. Yeah.

It's like we have front-row seats to the greatest story ever told. The greatest story ever told. A cosmic battle between good and evil that finds its resolution in Jesus Christ.

Yes. And we're not just watching. We're in it.

We're in the story, playing our parts. And that's a good place to pause our deep dive for today. I guess.

Join us for part three, where we'll unpack the imagery of Revelation and how it points toward the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan. For humanity in creation. Exactly.

All right. So we're back for the final part of our deep dive. Okay.

Exploring how the whole biblical story finds its resolution in Jesus. It all comes together. It does.

It really does. Yeah. So we've talked about those big themes from the Old Testament.

Right. Land, covenant, temple, God's people, kingship. And we've seen how they're kind of woven throughout the gospels and the rest of the New Testament.

Right. It's like a tapestry. Yeah.

It's beautiful. Yeah. And now we're turning to the book of Revelation.

All right. My favorite. Specifically chapters 21 and 22.

Okay. To see how Matthewson connects those themes to the new creation. Right.

The grand finale. The grand finale. I'm ready for some mind-blowing revelations.

Well, get ready because Revelation is full of vivid imagery and symbolic language. Yeah. It's a wild ride.

It is. But if we remember what we've already discussed about Jesus fulfilling those key Old Testament themes. It helps us understand what John is trying to say.

So how does Matthewson tie Revelation back to those themes? Yeah. Where do we even begin with a book like this? He starts with one of the most striking images in Revelation 21. Okay.

The new Jerusalem descending from heaven. Oh, wow. And this isn't just a pretty picture, you know.

Right. It's a powerful symbol of God's dwelling place coming down to earth. Okay.

So the temple theme is front and center right from the start. Exactly. But this isn't like the old temple in Jerusalem, is it? No.

Definitely not. Revelation 21.22 specifically says, Wow. So it echoes what we talked about earlier.

How Jesus himself became the dwelling place of God's presence. But now that reality is expanding. To encompass the entire city.

Yes. The new creation itself. So it's like God's presence isn't limited to a building anymore.

No. It's everywhere. It's everywhere.

All around. This makes me think about the description of the city in Revelation 21.23. Okay. Yeah.

It says, Beautiful imagery. Right. That's a beautiful image.

The glory of God, which once resided in the Holy of Holies. Right. Now illuminates the whole city.

And remember how Matthewson pointed out that John used that same word, glory. Yes. When describing Jesus in John 1.14. I do.

It's like a callback. Yeah. Connection.

Yeah. So it's like Jesus's glory. The radiance of his presence.

Yeah. Becomes the light source for the entire new creation. Exactly.

It's amazing. I'm getting chills just thinking about it. Me too.

It's powerful. Powerful stuff. And it connects back to how John describes Jesus as the true light that gives light to everyone in John 1.9. Right.

All these threads are woven together. Yeah. Highlighting Jesus as the source of life and light.

In this new creation. Yeah. It's amazing how it all comes together.

It is. Okay. We've got the temple theme covered.

Check. What about land? How does that play into Revelation? Well, Matthewson points out that the description of the New Jerusalem goes beyond just a city. It's described as having this massive garden with a river flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb and trees bearing fruit for healing.

Wow. So it's like the Garden of Eden, but on a cosmic scale. Exactly.

It's amazing. This connects back to the imagery of fruitfulness and abundance that we see in the Old Testament promises about the land. Right.

And remember how Matthewson suggested that the physical land ultimately pointed to the spiritual blessings and the fullness of life we find in Christ? Yeah. Well, in the new creation, those blessings are made real and tangible. It's not just about going to heaven when we die.

Yeah. It's about this renewed, resurrected creation where all the brokenness and pain are healed and made whole. It's hard to even imagine.

It's hard to wrap my mind around it. I know. It's a truly breathtaking concept.

And it offers incredible hope. It does. Notice how Revelation 21.4 says, Those words are so powerful.

They are. Especially when we think about all the suffering and heartache we see in the world. Yeah.

It's almost overwhelming to imagine a reality where all of that is gone. I know, but it's a beautiful reminder that the story doesn't end in tragedy or despair. Right.

It ends with hope, restoration, and a future more glorious than we can imagine. So we've got temple and land. Okay.

What about God's people? Who gets to be a part of this amazing new creation? Well, Revelation 21.3 puts it this way, And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, So it's not just a select few. Yeah. It's the people.

Yes. Everyone redeemed by Christ and brought into his family. It's a beautiful picture of unity and diversity.

It is. It's a picture of people from every nation and language coming together in worship. And fellowship with God.

And if God's people are dwelling with him in this incredible new creation, I imagine the kingship theme is there, too. Oh, absolutely. Revelation 22.5 says, We reign with Christ in the new creation.

Yes, we do. It's like what Paul says in Romans 8.1 sin. Okay.

About believers being co-heirs with Christ. Yeah. We share in his victory and his eternal reign.

It's an incredible privilege. It is. But also a responsibility.

Right. We're not just passively receiving God's blessings. Yeah.

We're active participants in his ongoing work of restoring and renewing all things. Okay. So we've seen how temple, land, God's people, and kingship are woven into this vision of the new creation.

We have. What about covenant? Ah, yeah. How does that fit into this final picture? Matthewson says that the new covenant, established by Jesus' sacrifice, finds its ultimate fulfillment in the new creation.

It makes sense. Remember, the new covenant promises forgiveness of sins. A new heart.

A new heart and a transformed relationship with God. And in the new creation, those promises are fully realized. Yes.

There's no more sin, brokenness, or separation from God. It's like a perfect union between God and humanity. Restored to how things were supposed to be in the Garden of Eden.

Right back to the beginning. Full circle. And Revelation 22.3 says, No longer will there be any curse.

It's powerful. The curse of sin that's been plaguing humanity since the fall is finally gone. We are completely free to experience the fullness of God's love and grace.

It makes you think about all the ways we try to create our own little utopias here on Earth. Yeah. Striving for peace, justice, and happiness.

But ultimately, only God can truly satisfy those longings. That's so true. The new creation isn't just a better version of this world.

No. It's a completely different reality. It's a whole new reality where God's presence and power are fully revealed.

And we're finally free to live in perfect harmony with him and with each other. It's the culmination of everything. Wow.

This has been an incredible journey. It has. Matthewson takes us through the whole Bible, culminating in this incredible vision of hope and restoration.

Yeah. It's not just an escape from this world. No.

It's a transformation of everything. Yes. A fulfillment of all that God intended from the very beginning.

And we're not just reading about history. We're participating in a living story. That continues to shape and transform our lives.

Well said. So, as we wrap up this deep dive, I'm left with this sense of awe and wonder. Me too.

The biblical story is truly epic. It is. It's full of twists and turns.

The ups and downs. But ultimately, it leads to this glorious climax that's still unfolding. It's not over yet.

Matthewson's lecture gives us this framework to understand the grand narrative of Scripture. A roadmap. But the real adventure is taking what we've learned and digging deeper into God's Word ourselves.

I encourage you to keep those five key themes in mind. Land, covenant, temple, God's people, and kingship. Yeah.

And see how they're woven throughout the entire Bible, pointing us to Jesus and the glorious hope of the new creation. Here's a final thought-provoking question to ponder. Okay, I like it.

How does this understanding of the new creation as the ultimate fulfillment of the biblical story impact your life today? What difference does it make in your relationships, your work, your hopes and dreams? That's a good one. Until next time, keep diving deep. Keep searching.