

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 396

Revelation 21-22, Part 1

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Episode Summary

Revelation 21-22 is John's climactic vision of the new Jerusalem and new earth. Not unexpectedly, there are deep Old Testament roots underlying his vision. But it is often a surprise to note that John specifically informs us that his end of days vision about the new, forever presence of God on earth does not include a new temple (Rev 21:22). What do we make of this absence given the Old Testament expectation of a new temple after the exile of Israel has been completed? This episode focuses on the broad Old Testament context of Rev 21-22 by examining Israelite "temple consciousness" before and during the exile. How did Israelites think about the concept of "temple"? How does that help us see what John is trying to communicate?

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 396: Revelation 21-22, Part 1. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing? [laughter]

MH: Hey, Trey! How are you doing? [laughter]

TS: Yeah, it's my turn! It's my turn! No, I really want to thank everybody. I know everybody's been praying for me. So I had a bout of Covid. I was in the hospital for a week. I'm out, obviously, now at home recovering. I'm good. My oxygen levels aren't as high as we want. I'm on oxygen. But I'm fine. I'm slowly recovering. It's just going to take time. You can probably hear it in my voice. But yeah, I appreciate everybody that's emailed me and been praying for me. It means a lot to me, Mike. It really is a great community we have here for the podcast. And I know you've felt the love, too, so it's my turn to feel some love. I appreciate it. And I'm glad to still be here.

MH: Yeah, well, we're obviously glad you're still here. I'll confess, I was worried. Because you had a little bit of some extra factors that Covid could really make a problem, so I was concerned. But to me you sound good. I know you're not where you typically are. But it's just nice to hear you. And you're not, like, desperate for air. I mean, it's just good to hear you.

TS: Yeah. As long as you don't make me get up and run around. I appreciate that. Yeah, I have asthma, so that was a big concern, of course. It probably was a factor in my Covid issue. But I'm good. As long as I don't stand up too fast and run around, you know, everything's fine. I *am* on oxygen, so that helps. But hopefully every day will get better. I'm on steroids for, like, a month. So it's just kind of one of those deals where you've just got to wait and see what happens—how your body responds.

MH: Make sure you have everybody else chase the dog. Now you have a good excuse to have people wait on you, you know?

TS: Yeah, absolutely. No, it's a good excuse to get back in shape, so I've got to get off my butt and quit being lazy. So that motivates you more than anything. So again, I just want to thank everybody out there. Continued prayers for me and you, Mike. Mike, it's your turn. How are you doing? What's the latest with you?

MH: Well, feel free to send some of your weight over here. [laughter] I could use it.

TS: Sure! Absolutely.

MH: We're recording this on what would normally be a chemo week, but we skipped the 4th cycle basically to see if we can deduce whether it contributes significantly to my gastrointestinal problems, which is a nice, scientific way of referring to my diarrhea problem. [laughs]

TS: Yeah.

MH: You know, I can eat normally, so there are some positives here. I can eat normally. I can, in theory, eat anything. I had a steak last week that was just wonderful. So I don't have any of those sorts of issues. But everything I eat (and I'm up to 2200-2300 calories a day) just runs right through me. So I can't gain weight. And if you go into chemo, it'll take five or six pounds from me every time I do it. So that's five or six pounds right now that I'll never see again. It's one of those cycles. So we're experimenting a little bit whether we need to tweak the chemo to help there. So I have an "off" cycle right now, which is great. Because nobody loves to go in for chemo. But on the other positive side, is on Tuesday, which would be the 26th, as we record this, I get another CAT scan. And so that is going to assess whether there's been improvement, whether essentially the chemo's doing what everybody hopes it'll do: shrinking the mass in preparation for surgery. And then on November 2nd, I have my first surgical consult. So the surgeon will have the two scans to do the before and after comparison, and we'll take it from there. I mean, nobody knows what to predict. Nobody is predicting anything because they figured the normal pace is four to six chemo cycles, and then you start talking about surgery if the chemo's doing what it's supposed to

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do. But the oncologist said, “You could walk in there and he could say, ‘Oh, it looks like you’re ready for surgery tomorrow! Let’s do that!’” You know? So there’s really no predictability to it. Obviously, we had lots of people praying for me and just the specifics of it. And now part of me is really... I’m really hoping that we’ll see something dramatic on the CAT scan. That would be nice. I mean, we trust the Lord and his sovereignty, as always. But it would be nice to see that specifically because (and I’ll let my praying public in on this), for some reason (I don’t know what it was) the oncologist made a point of telling me now, “It’s not my chemotherapy that can take this away. We’re working towards surgery.” Like, I already know that. But he just... I don’t know. He just seemed to think that I didn’t know that or whatever. So I’d love to go in there and have the thing gone and say, “Well, guess what. You just told me it wasn’t anything *you* did.”
[laughter]

TS: Yeah, that’d be great.

MH: “Guess what? I know something you don’t.” [laughter]

TS: Yeah. That can happen.

MH: That’d be a wonderful conversation to have.

TS: Absolutely. Yeah. Well, we’re praying for that. Two good dates coming up. So everybody keep praying. That’d be awesome. We’re going to turn this podcast into a medical show, Mike. I mean, we’ve got...

MH: Yeah, I know. Well, I thought about maybe some surgical wear with the Naked Bible logo on it. Some medical swag.

TS: [laughs] Yeah.

MH: For the kids. Pretend you’re a doctor with this Naked Bible swag. I think that’s the first swag idea you didn’t like, Trey. This is why I didn’t work in marketing.

TS: Well, yeah. That’s a downer. Nobody wants some health Naked Bible swag, that’s for sure. But maybe we can. I don’t know. We’ll think of something.

MH: [laughs] “Is this the podcast that makes you sick, Mommy?” [laughs]

TS: Yeah. Well, it’s going to be hopefully a podcast of miracles, you know, sooner rather than later.

MH: Yeah. Wouldn’t that be awesome.

TS: That'd be great. Well, Mike, this has been a...

MH: Yeah, we're on the cusp here of finishing Revelation.

TS: Yeah! I mean, people probably didn't think we were going to get to it. [laughs] But here we are. [MH laughs] We're on the cusp.

MH: Yeah, we are bound and determined to finish Revelation before it finishes us (or finishes me). [laughs]

TS: Exactly. Yeah. I mean, this is a good day. We're going to do two parts here. And Part 1... So I'm excited to wrap up Revelation. Because I want to know how this all ends, Mike. It means a lot to me and you. [laughs]

MH: Well, there's just a ton of stuff in these last two chapters by way of the Old Testament, which of course... If I have to remind you of what we're doing thematically here at this point when we're at the end of the book, well, that's pitiful in a way. But I'm going to do it anyway. Our thing is the use of the Old Testament in the book of Revelation. And there's so much in these two chapters that we are going to split... We're going to combine the chapters but split it into two parts.

In this episode today, I'm going to more or less just take a general look at how the Old Testament sort of sets the table for these last two chapters. What I mean by that is, there would be some that you either look at the chapters and you think, "Boy, this is kind of weird stuff. Like in the new Jerusalem, there's no temple. Like, what happened to the temple? Because there's all this emphasis on building a third temple." And as I've told people before who are of the persuasion to expect that if a new temple got built in Jerusalem it's a fulfillment of biblical prophecy, I personally don't think that. But if you have someone who does, well then what happens to that temple? Because the temple gets rebuilt, there's Armageddon, and now all of a sudden in the new city, there is no temple. I mean, Revelation 21:22 says that point-blank. There's no temple.

So this is one of the reasons why so many scholars have opted for a symbolic interpretation. And there would be a lot of people in the audience who sort of think that that's cheating, and they don't like the idea of not looking forward to a third temple. And by the way, just because it's not a fulfillment of prophecy in my view doesn't mean it couldn't happen. I mean, it very well could for political reasons or religious reasons, whatever, in the Jewish community over there. But I think it's a mistake to view that as a fulfillment of any particular prophecy. But it still could happen for other reasons. So I'm not opposed to it. But a lot of people who run into other believers that are *not* looking for this tend to think, "Well, you just want to spiritualize Revelation. You want to make it go away. You must be an amillennialist," or whatever—those sorts of things. Well, actually, what I want to

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do in this episode is show how, in the Old Testament... You know, that's the three quarters (and really the 90% if we include the New Testament other than the book of Revelation)... Ninety percent of your Bible does not point to a literal temple at the end. And the Old Testament does not either.

So what we're going to do today is we're going to go through the Prophets in sort of broad strokes and how the Prophets will take an Old Testament/new temple expectation... Because that's certainly true. If you were an Israelite, especially if you're living in the days leading up to (and, of course, after) the destruction of the Jerusalem temple, you are thinking that "God is not going to abandon us, and we're going to have our temple back. It's going to be rebuilt." You are certainly thinking that. But at the same time that the Old Testament lays that out there, it will conflate the idea of a new temple with (believe it or not) a new Jerusalem and a new earth. It does exactly what Revelation 21-22 does. So if you're going to accuse the book of Revelation (or someone interpreting the book of Revelation) of being anti-literal or spiritualizing the temple stuff, well, I'm sorry, you've got to do the same thing to your Old Testament.

And we're going to look in broad strokes at how the Prophets do this—how they combine these ideas—so that when we get to Revelation 21-22, it's stuff we've already seen before. Jewish readers would've been expecting this as well. It wouldn't have come as a shock. "What happened to that third temple we all wanted?" You know, if you had people who knew the Scriptures, they would say, "Well, you know, there's this passage in Ezekiel or Isaiah or Jeremiah or Zechariah (all of them, frankly, do it) where we have this hope for a new temple cast in terms of a new city and a new creation." And lo and behold, that's what we get in the end, in the book of Revelation.

So I want to go through that material. And then next time, Part 2, we'll be going through chapters 21-22 with an eye toward very specific items, kind of after the pattern that we've been wont to do up to this point. But we'll look at very specific items and their Old Testament connections.

So as we proceed, I think it's going to be helpful in grasping the larger idea of "temple"—what's... I mean, everybody knew what a temple was. It's a place you go to worship. You bring sacrifice. So on and so forth. But there's a larger concept in Old Testament theology of "temple." It's not just a place where you bring sacrifices. It means more than that. And I'm going to refer here to a dissertation that has since been published. And you can get it. It's not frightfully expensive. But if you have access to the ProQuest dissertation database, you can get this for free in pdf (I think even online if you google the name and the title, the University of St. Andrews might have an archive of their own for this dissertation, that you could get it for free). But the author's name is Pilchan Lee. So Pilchan Lee. And it's entitled "The New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation: A Study of Revelation 21-22 in Light of its Background in Jewish Tradition." And

this is a 1999 dissertation done by Dr. Lee at the University of St. Andrews, over in the UK.

So I want to sort of track through a few specific points that he spends lots and lots of time—devotes a lot of word count and space to each one of these. But he looks at Ezekiel. Really the whole book gives us what I would call “temple consciousness”—the concept of a temple. Again, it’s more than just a building or a place that you brought sacrifice. And then Isaiah 65-66 are really important. Jeremiah 30-31 are really important. And then Zechariah, the whole book, but I’ll just pluck out a few chapters where the concept of a temple... what it means. What would an Israelite have thought of if you were playing some kind of word game or Pictionary or whatever? I mean, there are lots of images—lots of thoughts and concepts—that are wrapped up and tied to, and that accrue to, the word “temple.” Again, it’s more than a building.

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So we’re not going to, obviously, be able to devote the kind of space that Lee does in his dissertation. But we’re just going to track through here and give you some examples of what we’re thinking about, and I think you’ll see pretty quickly how this sets up Revelation 21-22.

So if we look at Ezekiel... Let’s just start with Ezekiel. The book opens (as we know because we did a whole series on Ezekiel) with the throne of God descending to the earth. This is Ezekiel’s weird “wheels” vision. And we know it’s the throne of God because that’s what the account tells us, that there’s a divine man (God in human form) seated on a throne. The throne has wheels. There’s a throne platform. I mean, it’s very clear this is the throne of God descending to earth. And it’s a vision of global sovereignty by virtue of the four faces of the cherubim. We’ve talked about this in Revelation 4-5 in our episodes there and also, of course, our own episodes in Ezekiel in chapter 1 back in the Ezekiel series. The four faces of the cherubim are the cardinal points of the Babylon zodiac. That is not a mistake. It’s deliberate. It’s intentional. Ezekiel is using imagery that would be familiar not only to the captives in Babylon but to Babylonians as well. If we have a vision here of the four cardinal faces of the cherubim (points of the zodiac), then the messaging is obvious: God rules from his temple, and his temple is descending. The messaging is that he is still in control, even though he has allowed his people to be sent into exile for their idolatry. That doesn’t mean he is beaten. It doesn’t mean his program is beaten. God’s program is not going to be thwarted even by the disobedience of his own people. He is still in control. So the fact that his throne is portrayed in this manner (where you have the four corners of the earth accounted for) means that the scope of his rule is the whole earth and all the nations—not just Israel, but *all* the nations. The heavenly temple is the focus because the earthly temple is about to be destroyed. We learn that in the book of Ezekiel. So when the captives hear this news, the intention is for them to remember God is still on the throne. We

saw this as Ezekiel began his ministry in this vision that he related to us via his preaching.

When you get to Ezekiel 2, we have the glory departing. Of course, it departs in stages, and that runs through a number of chapters after chapter 2 and beyond. And I want to read a little bit of what Lee says in his dissertation on page 3. He writes:

Following the description of the heavenly things [MH: the cherubim specifically and the throne], accusations about the rebelliousness of the people of Israel and predictions of judgment against the rebelliousness are narrated in [Ezekiel] chs. 2-8. This serves to justify God's action of the withdrawal of His glory from Jerusalem/Temple [MH: the temple and Jerusalem itself] in chs. 9-11. The process of the withdrawal is gradually carried out through three steps. The first step of the withdrawal of the glory occurs in [chapter] 9:3. This text shows that when the glory of God moved from the cherub in the Temple to the threshold of the Temple, God executed his judgment against the rebellious people through the agent who is called 'the man in linen'. God also protected the godly people by placing a mark on the foreheads of those who were sighing and groaning over all the abominations that were committed (9:4).

We've had this imagery directly from Ezekiel 9 in the book of Revelation, with the mark put upon the 144,000. This is drawn directly from the same chapter here in Ezekiel. Back to Lee:

This immediate action of 'the man in linen' [MH: putting the mark on the foreheads of the godly] indicates that the removal of God's glory from the Temple necessitated the judgment against Israel [MH: everyone who doesn't have the mark is going to be judged, and this is outlined in Ezekiel] (cf. 10:2-9)... In 10:18-19 the process of the removal is once again advanced. In particular, the phrase, 'the cherubim rose up from earth' in 10:19 clearly represents the departure of the glory of God from the earthly Temple. At last, the cherubim stopped at the entrance of the east gate of the house and the glory of the God of Israel was there also. 11:22-23 demonstrates the final stage of the process of removal. The foregoing text shows that the glory of God is not completely removed from the city of Jerusalem but only from the earthly Jerusalem Temple. The glory remains on the mountain east of the city. This position leaves open the possibility of restoration as well as judgment against the rebellious people. These twin aspects establish a pattern for the following chapters until the full detail of the restoration is given in chs. 36-48 [MH: that's the big temple description in the book]... In 11:17-20, the promises of restoration are provided as follows [MH: now listen to the list that you actually get in Ezekiel 11 about the restoration of God's presence in the city and of course at this point in the temple—the temple expectation]: 1) returning/gathering from exile to the land of Israel (11:17); 2) removal of the

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detestable heart and endowment of a new heart and a new spirit within them (11:18-20a) [MH: that's the new covenant]; 3) renewal of the [MH: old] covenant (11:20b). Therefore [MH: to conclude from those three things], God being the Temple for Israel in the exile promotes a sense of expectation for restoration.

Now what does Lee mean by that? If you look at those things, you have a return of the Israelites (the Judeans) to the land of Israel. We have a new covenant—a new heart—given to those people and a new spirit within them. And then we have a renewal of the relationship between God and his people, just the covenantal relationship that we would expect to be there since the times of Abraham and Moses. All three of those things happen in the New Testament. They precede the second coming. We have in Pentecost the fulfillment of this regathering. We have the Spirit coming. The new covenant is fulfilled at Pentecost. The family of God is essentially reborn, and now it's renewed. Yes, there's a covenantal idea that has always existed, all the way back to Abraham and Moses. But this new covenant is going to include new people (the Gentiles).

So we've had all these things and they're easy to detect in the New Testament, but they're all precursors to this idea of getting this new temple—getting the very presence of God back on earth and a new city. Because the city was destroyed, too, by the Babylonians. It's not just the temple; it's all of Jerusalem. So the expectation is to have a new Jerusalem that's as good or better than the old and a new temple. And all these things in the prophecy of Ezekiel preceded that.

Now Lee goes on to outline a series of events in his dissertation. He goes through Ezekiel 12-35. And he goes through a whole series of these. Again, this is the part where we just can't reproduce this in a podcast. There's a dozen of them that demonstrate the opportunity for and expectation of restoration of the people of God and a new city, a new temple, all this.

Now the first of those is “the establishment of an everlasting covenant by the remembrance and the renewal of God's covenant with Israel in the past.” We get some of that in Ezekiel 16. Then there's “the gathering of the people” that he refers to in chapter 11. It gets referred to again in Ezekiel 20. The third example: there's a prophecy of a “peaceful, safe, and bountiful life upon their return to Jerusalem from exile.” The returning captives have safety in life; they build houses; they plant vineyards. This is Ezekiel 28:25-26. The fourth is a prophesied new creation itself cast in Edenic terms. And here I'm going to quote from Lee's summary. He says... Especially this third and fourth illustration of the events of Ezekiel 12-35. He summarizes this way. We read about the...

...banishment of wild animals from the land; sending of seasoning showers as God's blessing; the trees' yielding fruits and the productiveness of the land; acknowledgment of God; no more plunder for the nations; no more animals of the land to devour them; life in safety; provision of splendid vegetation with no

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more hunger in the land; an end to suffering from the insults of the nations; Israel belonging to God as His sheep in His pasture.

And that really derives from Ezekiel 34:25-30. It sounds a lot like Eden, doesn't it? It's supposed to. Because this, ultimately, is where everything is headed back toward.

So we have prophecies of the new covenant, national resurrection, national restoration, an Edenic set of circumstances in the land. This is Ezekiel 12-35. And when you hit Ezekiel 36, then the national resurrection idea gets really ramped up. Ezekiel 37 is the dry bones. I mean, all these chapters we've done episodes on, and specifically Episodes 150-157, 341-342, and then 391-392, to loop in Ezekiel 38-39.

Now for our purposes here today, there are several points to be made from all of this as it pertains to the book of Ezekiel, what Lee is trying to embed in our consciousness about how Israelites (especially those coming out of exile or expecting to come out of exile) would have thought about temple.

(1) First there's a restoration of a new Jerusalem with a temple. That was certainly expected by Israelites. So they anticipate getting back what was lost.

(2) This new Jerusalem, strangely enough, gets cast in restored Edenic terms. So rather than specifically talking about a building or any one element of a city, the whole land is in view. And again, you get this Edenic description about "no more hunger; no more disease, and there's always enough to eat, always enough rain. Even the animals that would kill us aren't going to kill us anymore. There's no nations around us to threaten us." You know? If they rebuilt a temple today in Jerusalem, there are plenty of nations around them that would still want to threaten Israel. In fact, the circumstances of a third temple would make it worse. Okay? So it doesn't really conform to what Ezekiel is talking about here. The end (the new city, the new Jerusalem, and the new Eden—the new earth)... It certainly fits the description. But all the way back in the Old Testament you get this Edenic feel for what's going on.

(3) Since the new temple/new Jerusalem was essentially recast as a new Edenic earth in the Old Testament, this sets the stage for Revelation 21, which opens precisely that way. It describes a city (the new Jerusalem) as the heart of a new creation, and that city actually *lacks* a temple. I'm going to read Revelation 21, the first three verses, and then I'm going to skip to verse 22. So if we actually look at what Revelation 21 says...

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth,

Okay, this is right after what? It's right after the second coming. It's right after chaos has been dealt with in the lake of fire. We talked about these things in two installments with Revelation 19. It's after all these things (the demise of antichrist and whatnot).

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

That's probably my favorite verse in the New Testament. Sea is a chaos image. There's no more chaos.

² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man.

Now let me just stop there. He's not describing a new temple. He's describing a new city (Jerusalem).

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

And you go down to verse 22 and John is very clear. He describes the city with the streets of gold like clear glass and all these different gemstones—the imagery of the city and its splendor, the spectacular nature of it. And then he hits verse 22 and says:

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²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

That's the temple—God himself and, of course, the Lamb, who is the risen Christ. There's no building there. It's *them*. Okay?

So I think it's important to just hear how Revelation 21 starts out, that there is no temple. And we would think it's odd. "Why are you fixated on describing this city, John? What's all this new earth, Edenic stuff going on? What about the new temple?" "The temple is God. The temple is the returned Christ." I hate to use this language, but it looks like John spiritualizes the temple. [laughs] You know? And according to some, that's what he's doing, because he's not talking about

building a structure. He's not talking about a structure at all. He's talking about the body of Christ. Christ himself *is* the temple. Okay? God and Christ *are* the temple.

So right away, it takes you into this mode, and this is the point of our episode today: that's not at odds with the Old Testament. It's actually in concert with it. Because the Old Testament will take expectations of a new temple and it will conflate them with a vision of a new city and a new earth. That's exactly what Revelation 21-22 does.

Now if you recall our earlier podcasts on Revelation 19 (when we did two parts), in Revelation 16-19 you have this cycle of the end of chaos, the return of Jesus, the consummation of the new earth. We've spent a lot of time going over that ground. Did you notice, none of it involved building a new structure in Jerusalem? None of it involved building a temple, either before or after those events. And now that we're after (Revelation 21-22), it still doesn't. Recall, as well, that New Testament temple talk... When I say "temple talk" I mean how the New Testament uses "temple" to talk not about a building, but about something else, namely the body of Christ. And this begins in John 2, who incidentally, written by John... This is the John that most scholars would argue is the same author as the book of Revelation. So John (if that's the case, and you can certainly build a really good case for that), when John thinks "temple," yes he knows about the literal temple. He's a Jew. He grew up in Jerusalem. He knows all that. But his concept of temple is so much bigger. And in John 2, this is the passage where Jesus gets in trouble with the Pharisees when he says, "Destroy this temple and in three days it'll be restored." And the Pharisees are like, "What's this dude talking about? It took over 40 years to build this thing, and he's talking about he can rebuild it in three days?" And John tells us he wasn't speaking about the literal temple; he was speaking about his body. The body of Christ is the temple in John 2.

Again, this is an Old Testament thought. It's not just something John's making up because he needs to finish the second chapter and doesn't know how. And Peter and Paul follow John in this thinking in their own descriptions of believers (the body of Christ). Believers are the body of Christ. They are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3, 1 Corinthians 6, 2 Corinthians 6). You have the description in Peter about believers being living stones and Christ the cornerstone. You know, this language is deliberate. It's about the returned Christ. It's about the body of Christ, we who are him. He gets the promises of messianic rule in the new earth, and guess what? So do we. He hands them to us. He shares them because we are his body. "To him that overcomes, I will set him over the nations. He will sit with me on my throne to rule." So Revelation 21-22 does not come out of the blue. Its elements, the way it understands temple, is not lacking precedent. The precedent is the Old Testament, and if we want to loop the New Testament in there, too (other parts of it.)

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Now let's go to Isaiah 65-66. You get more of this from Isaiah. So that was Ezekiel, how this temple talk is leading to something much bigger. And if you're wondering about the temple vision in Ezekiel 40-48, again, we did a whole series on Ezekiel. I recommend listening to the last two episodes of the book. Ezekiel 40-48 we devoted two episodes to that. The first one we said, "If this is a literal temple, how do we read this? And are there any problems?" And yeah, there are. And then the second part is, "Well, is there any indication this might not be best understood literally?" And there's some crazy stuff. And if you're not used to thinking in this mode, it's some amazing stuff from both the Old Testament and the New Testament that should influence our temple thinking. But let's go to Isaiah 65-66, and Lee on page 12 writes this:

The Book of Isaiah is full of the restorational messages. They are largely but conclusively confined to chs. 40-66. Among chs. 40-66, [Isaiah] 65:16-25 is the most systematized passage about the restoration of the New Jerusalem. In this respect, this study [MH: his own study and of course his book, if you choose to buy it] aims first to provide a thorough exegesis of that passage.

So he spends a lot of time on Isaiah 65 and on into Isaiah 66. And that alone is worth the price of the book. Because this passage is so key. He says:

Moreover, motifs in 65:16-25 appear to be similar to those in 66:1-24.

And if you look at that, Lee says, if you look at the similarities between what is said in chapter 65 to what's in chapter 66, you'll see that the latter (Isaiah 66) complements—dovetails, supplements—chapter 65.

...Isa. 65: 16-25 is divided into two parts [MH: and here they are]: the New Creation and the New Jerusalem (vss. 16-18) and Life in the New Jerusalem/the New Creation (vss. 19-25).

So what's interesting is that when Isaiah begins to allude to getting the temple back, he talks about that idea in connection with the new creation and the new Jerusalem, just like Revelation 21-22 does. I hope what's ringing around in your head is, "Well, isn't it logical to assume that John, when he wrote Revelation 21-22 used and repurposed Ezekiel and Isaiah 65-66 to say what he wanted to say?" And the answer to that is, "Of course. Sure." That's exactly what I'm trying to get you to see. The descriptions there are not random. They come out of the Old Testament. It's not just sort of wishful thinking on the part of an amillennialist or something like that. This is Old Testament. A lot of us typically neglect this stuff, but it's there. Now let's look at Isaiah 65. And I'm going to read verses 16-18 to you. It's already going to sound like Revelation 21 because I just read the first few verses in Revelation 21. But here we go with Isaiah 65:16-18:

**16 so that he who blesses himself in the land [MH: now they're going back to the land here]
 shall bless himself by the God of truth,
 and he who takes an oath in the land
 shall swear by the God of truth;
 because the former troubles are forgotten
 and are hidden from my eyes.**

**[MH: this is the Lord speaking now]
 17 "For behold, I create new heavens
 and a new earth,
 and the former things shall not be remembered
 or come into mind.**

**18 But be glad and rejoice forever
 in that which I create;
 for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy,
 and her people to be a gladness.**

In fact, it is Isaiah 65:17 that John quotes in Revelation 21 about former things not being remembered or coming to mind. He quotes this verse.

Now if you look at the two verses here (verses 16-17), they parallel each other. And Lee writes:

Both 16 and 17 emphasize the removal from the memory of 'the former troubles...

Remember verse 16: "The former troubles are forgotten; they are hidden from my eyes," says the Lord." And verse 17 says the same thing: "The former things shall not be remembered or come to mind." Now in Isaiah's context, this is the Babylonian exile. This is the terrible thing that's going to happen to the people of God. They're going to be judged, forsaken by God (not forever, because there is restoration planned). But this is their punishment for idolatry. They're going to go into exile in Babylon, into the domain of chaos, right into the heart of the lion—the heart of chaos. Now Lee comments and he says the structure of the two verses...

...shows that the New Creation in [MH: verse] 17 [MH: remember Isaiah said, "for behold I create a new heavens and a new earth"] and the New Jerusalem in 18 [MH: "for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy"] are given as the compensation for the past shameful history, namely the Babylonian exile...

40:00

In other words, the solution to the exile is not building a third temple—a literal temple. The solution to the exile, ultimately, is a new city and a new earth.

The New Creation and the New Jerusalem are so powerfully introduced to the Israelites that they may be able to erase the period of the Babylonian exile. Moreover, 18 illustrates God's creative work spoken of the New Jerusalem in 18d as well as the New Creation in 17. In this case, the summons to joyfulness in 18 stresses the greatness of the New Jerusalem by its insertion just before the reference to the New Jerusalem [MH: in the actual passage].

Now Lee goes on in his dissertation. He goes on in regard to how the new Jerusalem is closely related with the new creation. And he writes this:

[T]he restoration of Jerusalem entails the restoration of creation just as Isa 65:19-25 will show below...

Let me just stop there, with that first sentence. Do you realize that there are a number of passages in the Prophets that link the restoration of Jerusalem to the restoration of creation itself? So what that means in practical terms is that if you build a third temple today and let's say you cleaned up Jerusalem—you got rid of all the terrorists, you had no crime, you had this wonderful society where people are dwelling in peace... I mean, none of this would happen if we built a third temple today anyway, because it would infuriate Israel's enemies. But let's just say it did. What's supposed to happen along with it is the new earth—the new creation. Those things go hand in hand in the Old Testament. And I have yet to come across someone who really enjoys... And it's not a crime; it's not a sin. They enjoy the idea of Israel getting a third temple. It would be cool. And I'll admit, it *would* be cool. I'd hold my breath, again, because of the enemies around her. But I have yet to come across anybody who really is into this idea of a third temple mention that, "Oh, and when this happens, then we get the new Eden—we get the new creation," which of course involves the destruction of the old one. [laughs] What I'm getting at here is, there are a lot of people who look for the former, but they forget the latter because they don't know their Old Testament well. They only see part of it. You can't talk about a restored Jerusalem without talking about the restoration of creation unless you just don't mention the Prophets. Well, good luck with that. That would really be cheating on a grand scale, to be honest with you. These two things go hand in hand in the prophets' minds. So back to Lee, he says:

[G]enerally speaking, Jerusalem or Zion is the center of God's rule in the history of Israel (cf. Jer. 3:17, Ezek. 5:5)... While God rules the whole universe, He focuses his rule on the nation, Israel. While he rules the whole land of Israel, he reveals his ruling power through the city, Jerusalem. Therefore, Jerusalem is the place which illustrates the fact that God rules the whole universe. People see God's glory through the city. Therefore, it is possible to say that the New Jerusalem is the

center of the New Creation [MH: it certainly is the book of Revelation]. In the New Creation, the New Jerusalem is the place which reveals God's sovereignty more gloriously than any place else, though the New Creation itself also reveals it. Therefore, without the New Jerusalem, the New Creation is meaningless. Accordingly, the restoration of Jerusalem results in the restoration of God's sovereignty, and the restoration of God's sovereignty results in the restoration of creation.

45:00 You know, pardon me if we dip back into Revelation 19 a little bit. But can we see now why Armageddon is not about the plains of Megiddo (again, there's no mountain there anyway)? It's about Jerusalem. It's about Zion. Jerusalem is the lynchpin to all of it. And by the way, an amillennialist wouldn't say that. I would because I'm not an amillennialist. (Again, we talked about this in Revelation 19 as well.) It doesn't bother me in the least that I don't fit the typical nomenclature. Oh, well. These things are in the text. And it's up to us to try to figure out how to understand—how to connect the dots that are in the text. And not surprisingly, Beale and McDonough in their Revelation commentary... Specifically, it's the Old Testament in the New Testament commentary edited by Beale and Carson, which we have used throughout this series, so it's a great tool. But Beale and McDonough, who wrote the chapter on Revelation, pick up on this trajectory—this linkage. And they write this:

The new cosmos will be an identifiable counterpart to the old cosmos and a renewal of it, just as the body will be raised without losing its former identity... The qualitative antithesis between the first world and the second one is highlighted by Isa. 65:17; 66:22...

Let me just read both of those. I'll read them in tandem here. Isaiah 65:17 says:

**17 "For behold, I create new heavens
and a new earth,
and the former things shall not be remembered
or come into mind.**

And now Isaiah 66:22 says:

**22 "For as the new heavens and the new earth
that I make
shall remain before me, says the LORD,
so shall your offspring and your name remain.**

And we'll throw in verse 23:

**²³ From new moon to new moon,
and from Sabbath to Sabbath,
all flesh shall come to worship before me,
declares the LORD.**

I mean, these two things go together. Like Beale and McDonough say, “the qualitative antithesis between the first world and the second one is highlighted by” these two verses...

...which stand behind the wording of Rev. 21:1 [MH: which dips into] Isa. 65:17 LXX: “For there shall be a new heaven and new earth; and they will by no means remember the former” (cf. 66:22).

And if the one is going to endure (like Isaiah 66:22 says), well, so is the other one. Because they’re linked. Back to Beale and McDonough, they say:

Isaiah 65:16–18 makes a qualitative contrast between the “former” earth, where the “first affliction” of captivity occurred, and “a new heaven and a new earth,” where there will be only enduring “joy and exultation.” Isaiah 66:22 affirms that one of the qualitative differences is that “the new heaven and new earth” will “remain” forever, in contrast to the old, which passed away. Revelation 21:1 portrays the future fulfillment of the two Isaianic new creation prophecies. Judaism [MH: more widely, Second Temple Judaism] also conceived of the new creation as a renewal or renovation of the old creation [MH: and he cites a bunch of Apocryphal passages here] (see *Jub.* 1:29; 4:26; *1 En.* 45:4–5; *2 Bar.* 32:1–6; 57:2; *4 Ezra* 7:75; *Tg. Ps.-J.* Deut. 32:1; *Tg. Hab.* 3:2).

And these ideas are linked together. And when we try to interpret these things, we need to honor the linkage. We need to not put asunder what God has joined together [laughs] in the text.

Now one last thought before going to Jeremiah (because we have Jeremiah and Zechariah to pick up yet). Scholars have noticed that the blessings or conditions described for the new Jerusalem and new creation are the reverse of the covenantal curses found in Deuteronomy 28. Remember Deuteronomy 28-29? These are the blessings and the cursings (or the cursings and the blessings) that have to do with remaining in the land or being expelled from it. So Pilchan Lee in his dissertation writes this. He says:

In the New Jerusalem, nature will be restored into the original peaceful condition of the Garden of Eden where wild animals will not prey on the domestic animals (cf. [MH: Isaiah] 43:20). This peace in the animal world provides safety and

security for people in the New Jerusalem. This is also the reverse of the covenantal curses in Deut. 28:26 (cf. Isa. 13:20-21).

50:00

So scholars have noticed this, that these blessings that are summarized in these Isaiah passages with the new Jerusalem and the new heaven, they reverse the expulsion curses in Deuteronomy 28. And here's why I bring it up. That reversal linkage is another sign that the circumcision-neutral Body of Christ is a new Israel. Again, it's not *the* new Israel. I'm not a supercessionist. But the Body of Christ is a new Israel. We have a circumstance that plays itself out in the Church. We're in Revelation 21-22 now, folks. We're dealing with Gentiles in the Church. We're in a book (the book of Revelation) that has called Gentiles a kingdom of priests, along with the Jews. We've seen plenty of places where the people of God... There's only one people of God. It has a Jewish component; it has a Gentile component. But there's *one* people of God. And the fact that the curses put on the original people of God (the Jew who went into exile because of their idolatry) are reversed by the circumstances of the *new* people of God (that includes Gentiles) is interesting, to say the least. Isaiah 66 ends with Gentiles being grafted into the family and worshiping the Lord at Jerusalem. It's just another trajectory that shows the unity of the people of God. It's tied up with what the new Jerusalem is. There are no insiders and outsiders. There are only insiders. And of course, the new earth... We go back to Eden before there was such a thing as a Jew and a Gentile. There is *one* people of God. That's the way it started at the beginning and this is the way it's going to end, because God will run everything full circle. There will be no more nations to plague the people of God as a nation. Those who survive among the nations are believers. They follow the risen Christ. They follow the gospel. They are happy to be part of a new Jerusalem and God doing something new with the old. And all of it focuses on Zion and Jerusalem. The city and the land are linked to a new creation itself. I mean, all these things are interrelated. But none of this is literal temple talk.

And this is what I'm hoping that you see as we go into Revelation 21-22 in Part 2. You know, restricting the Old Testament and New Testament temple language to one building in one place diminishes the impact of all the concepts that the temple embraces.

Now it should also be noted that at various places in Isaiah leading up to chapters 65-66, Isaiah contains passages that, like Ezekiel, lead the reader to expect the rebuilding of a lost temple. So there is this expectation. Again, we're not denying it. But what we miss is that there are certain passages that, while they have this expectation, they do something different with it than you and I would perhaps expect. Let's look at Isaiah 28. Isaiah 28 is one of these passages about expecting a new temple. So let's read Isaiah 28. I'm going to go back to verse 14 here. I'll read 14-18. But the verse that we want to focus on is verse 16. So listen to this:

**14 Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers,
who rule this people in Jerusalem!**

Boy, isn't that just a cutting remark? [laughs] He calls the Jerusalem leaders "scoffers." Well, anyway... I just love stuff like that. I love digs like that. But anyway:

**14 Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers,
who rule this people in Jerusalem!**
**15 Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death,
and with Sheol we have an agreement,
when the overwhelming whip passes through
it will not come to us,
for we have made lies our refuge,
and in falsehood we have taken shelter";**

What he's alluding to here basically is the BS that the Jerusalem leadership had been telling the people. "Oh, yeah, things are bad. We have enemies and the enemies are going to come and we're going to have war. But we'll be okay. We'll be okay. The Lord is with us"—all the while being idolaters. They're living out the lies they tell. Okay? And God knows it. What they've actually done is make a covenant with death.

**16 therefore thus says the Lord God,
"Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion,
a stone, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation:
'Whoever believes will not be in haste.'**
**17 And I will make justice the line,
and righteousness the plumb line;
and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
and waters will overwhelm the shelter."**
**18 Then your covenant with death will be annulled,
and your agreement with Sheol will not stand;
when the overwhelming scourge passes through,
you will be beaten down by it.**

55:00

So you've made your... You've aligned yourself with other gods, gods who can't promise you anything (certainly life), gods who have lied to you and you've just bought their lies and now perpetuate their lies and live them out. "The end

thereof are the ways of death” because only with Yahweh is there life—this whole idea. And the Lord is saying, “It’s not going to work. When it hits the fan, your covenant with these other gods, it’s over. It’s not going to stand, and you’re going to get overwhelmed. Now look at what he says in the middle of this.

**¹⁶ therefore thus says the Lord God,
“Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion,
a stone, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation:
‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’**

And then he talks about justice and righteousness. Now that passage I’m sure sounds familiar. “I lay in Zion a stone, a chief cornerstone.” So let’s ask ourselves the question. How does Isaiah 28:16 get fulfilled? Because you would think if you’re reading Isaiah 28 (and especially if you’re an Israelite in hindsight after the temple has been destroyed—let’s say you’re living in the Second Temple period and you read this), you’re naturally going to think, “Wow! The Lord isn’t going to forsake us entirely. He’s got a foundation cornerstone laid there. In other words, he’s going to finish what he started there. We’re going to get the temple back. We’re going to get it back. The Lord has not forgotten us.” I mean, this is a natural way to look at it. But the question is, “How does it actually get fulfilled?” Was the third temple built and Israel’s covenant with death (you know, the exile) resolved? No. So we can’t look at anything prior to the New Testament like that. But when we look at the New Testament, where is this verse actually cited? Let’s go to Matthew 21:42.

**⁴² Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:
“‘The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is marvelous in our eyes’?**

So what’s the stone he’s talking about? He quotes that verse right after the parable of the tenants. You know, there’s a master in the house who planted a vineyard. Okay? And when the season for its fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get its fruit. And the tenants watching over the field (who would be the leadership in Jerusalem if we take it back to Isaiah) reject his servants. They beat them and kill them and they stone them. And then he reasons, “Well, surely they won’t do that if I send my son. They’ll respect my son,” the master of the house thinks. He sends his son and they kill him, too. So the son (and, of course, Jesus in context) *is* this cornerstone. Now think about that. If you’re a Jew and you know Isaiah 28 and you’ve been thinking all along that this means we’re going to get the temple back, here’s the question: “Did you get the temple

back?” Be careful how you answer. You didn’t get a literal building. But you got the messiah. He did come. He did die. He did rise again. He did ascend to the Father. He did everything that he was asked to do by the Father. Yeah, you got the messiah. Have you rejected him? See, the messiah turns out to be the cornerstone. It has nothing to do with a literal temple. In fact, here we go again. The temple turns out to be the body of Christ—Christ himself. He is the temple.

So that’s Matthew 21:42. How about Acts 4:11? This is the other place where the passage is quoted (the Isaiah 28 passage). So we’ve got Acts 4:11. And this the apostles preaching to the rulers of the people and the elders (the perfect audience) after they’ve healed someone, and of course the leadership is irate.

1:00:00

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹ if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. ¹¹ This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. ¹² And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Now again, if you’re a Second Temple Jew and you know Isaiah 28 and you’re expecting a literal building to come out of that prophecy and you’ve heard about (or maybe seen) the events of Pentecost... You’re living in Jerusalem where you see the followers of Jesus telling you that the new covenant has come, you’ve seen the gathering of Jews from all over the world for Pentecost and how they go back believing and preaching about the messiah, how that’s going to be a reversal of Babel—Babylon, the whole exilic situation... And then you hear about this healing, or maybe you witness it, and then these guys who just healed this man and who did what they did on the day of Pentecost, where 3,000 people believe and are saved, say, “Hey, you know that cornerstone passage back in Isaiah 28 that we were all kind of thinking at one point was about rebuilding a temple?” By the way, they have a temple. [laughs] You know? The one that hasn’t yet been destroyed by the Romans. Guess what? That’s not really the temple. The chief cornerstone—the stone that Isaiah talked about—is Jesus. And this is what I mean by New Testament (and now we’re finding out Old Testament) temple consciousness. It’s just a bigger concept than a building.

So let’s go to Jeremiah 30-31 real quickly. Lee introduces the contribution of these two chapters and temple thinking this way:

Jeremiah lived during the period of upheaval in both northern Israel and southern Judah. Most of his message appears to contain judgment against sinful Israel. However, the messages of restoration are included within the dreadful judgment messages [MH: that's a nice way of summarizing the whole book]. In other words, the messages of restoration are fragmentarily scattered throughout the book without an apparent coherent structure and presentation [MH: they're just sprinkled in there]... where the pronouncements of judgment are predominant. This location implies that God's judgment will eventually lead to restoration and guarantees to reverse the curses caused by God's judgment. However, these messages, in the midst of dominantly judgmental oracles, are fully formalized in chs. 30-31 [MH: they're kind of presented more formally there], which is so called a book of consolation, and they are corroborated and supplemented in chs. 32-33.

By the way, chapter 33 is the new covenant. So let's look at Jeremiah 30:1-3 and verses 8-11:

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ²“Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you. ³For behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the LORD, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it.”

Now think about two phrases. 1) “I’m going to bring them back.” And 2) “they’re going to take possession.” Okay? Verse 8:

⁸“And it shall come to pass in that day, declares the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off your neck, and I will burst your bonds, and foreigners shall no more make a servant of him. ⁹But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

¹⁰“Then fear not, O Jacob my servant, declares the LORD, nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from far away, and your offspring from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease, and none shall make him afraid.

¹¹For I am with you to save you, declares the LORD; I will make a full end of all the nations

**among whom I scattered you,
but of you I will not make a full end.
I will discipline you in just measure,
and I will by no means leave you unpunished.**

1:05:00

Again, you're not going to be done away with permanently. Now look at what we've got here. We've got a reference to taking possession. We've got a couple of references to being brought back to the land. Of course that's where they would take possession. And we have a reference to David the king. Now possessing the land and taking up occupation suggests (it doesn't state but it suggests) the need for a new temple, because you're going to have to worship somewhere. Release from the nations is also in this picture. In other words, there's going to be no more nations to harass and bother you. And again, that smacks of a time when the nations are on your side. So we're getting a little hint of sort of the kind of stuff we'd see in Isaiah 65-66. We have the judgment of chaos and restoration and a hint of being brought back into the land. And again, if we take possession of it, that requires a temple. Now in Jeremiah 30 a little later in verse 18 it says this:

**¹⁸ "Thus says the LORD:
Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob
and have compassion on his dwellings;
the city shall be rebuilt on its mound,
and the palace shall stand where it used to be.**

Now this is clear. Now we're talking about a rebuilt city. And we're talking about a palace, which means the king is going to be there. Now nestled in a bunch of this stuff... Or not nestled in here, but before you get here, you actually do get a more direct reference to the need for a temple in Jeremiah. And this is going to come as a surprise (unless you've watched my FringePop episode on the ark of the covenant). You may never have seen this or heard this before. Along with this rebuilding of the new community in Jeremiah 30 (because that's what we have—the new community, the king, the land, all this stuff)... Jeremiah 3 is the other significant passage, for it morphs talk of the throne of the Lord... What do we usually think of when we think of the throne of the Lord? Well, we think of the cherubim, which makes us think of the ark. We think of the ark because the ark was the Lord's seat—the so-called mercy seat. Later it's going to be called the footstool. Again, if you've read *Unseen Realm* you know why. But we usually think of the ark of the covenant. So Jeremiah 3 kind of morphs talk of the throne of the Lord into the new Jerusalem. Like, so it goes from talking about the ark to the new Jerusalem. And so again, temple talk morphing into the whole city, which sounds like Revelation 21. Listen to Jeremiah 3. Again, you may never have heard this before. It says:

**¹² Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say,
“Return, faithless Israel,
declares the LORD.
I will not look on you in anger,
for I am merciful,
declares the LORD;
I will not be angry forever.**

**¹³ Only acknowledge your guilt,
that you rebelled against the LORD your God
and scattered your favors among foreigners under every green tree,
and that you have not obeyed my voice,
declares the LORD.**

**¹⁴ Return, O faithless children,
declares the LORD;
for I am your master;
I will take you, one from a city and two from a family,
and I will bring you to Zion.**

¹⁵ “And I will give you shepherds after my own heart...

So here we have this thing about a return. And this time we're going to get new shepherds that are not idolaters. It's a reference to apostles and prophets and people like this who recognize Jesus as messiah, and so on and so forth.

**I will take you, one from a city and two from a family,
and I will bring you to Zion.**

¹⁵ “And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. ¹⁶ And when you have multiplied and been fruitful in the land, in those days, declares the LORD, they shall no more say, “The ark of the covenant of the LORD.” It shall not come to mind or be remembered or missed; it shall not be made again.

[laughs] This is Jeremiah 3 telling us that the ark of the covenant, yeah, it's gone. By the time you read the finished book of Jeremiah it's going to be history because of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion. And again, you can watch my FringePop episode or listen to the podcast episode we did on this. But it's missing. It's gone. And right here, point-blank, it says, “It shall not be made again.” I would suggest to you that if the plan was to rebuild a new temple literally (a building), you're going to need an ark. But not only is it not going to be built again, right from the mouth of Jeremiah, verse 17:

17 At that time Jerusalem [MH: *Jerusalem*] shall be called the throne of the LORD, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they shall no more stubbornly follow their own evil heart.

1:10:00

It sounds to me like the city is the temple. And that sounds an awful lot like, yep, Revelation 21. So again, we have this expanded temple thinking that refers more to the returned messiah and more to Zion, more to the city and of course the new creation, than anything else. Viewed in its totality, this is even a denial that the ark of the covenant's going to be rebuilt. It doesn't say it'll be found either. Again, I think this is the clearest reference. And you rarely ever find it mentioned in discussions about what happened to the ark of the covenant. It's exceedingly rare to find this reference. Because it basically says, "It's lost. It got destroyed." Whoever... Whatever. Regardless, it's lost, and it won't be built again. You're not going to need it. Because you don't need the temple, because the temple *is* the returning Lord. The temple *is* the glory returned to the city (of course, we know in the form of the returned Christ at his second coming). That's where all this stuff points to. Again, it sounds a whole lot like Revelation 21. So again, this is what you get.

On Zechariah, our last little portion here, most scholars divide Zechariah into two sections (chapters 1-9 and 10-14). But there's a lot in the book about the exile and the restoration. And when you talk about exile and restoration, you're invariably talking about a new city and a new temple and people being regathered—all these things that we've seen in these other Prophets. So I want to park on a few places in Zechariah because the whole book is filled with this stuff. In Zechariah 3, the nation is cleansed. Remember the vision of Joshua the high priest? He has the filthy garments which represent the crimes and the sins of the nation. The filthy garments get taken away and they get changed into new garments. So in this chapter we have the nation cleansed and forgiven. The high priest is restored. His garments are a big deal. He can't minister in a temple unless his clothing is pure and he's clean. So right away we have this sort of temple expectation again, because we have a priesthood expectation. This suggests a renewed priesthood. And you wouldn't renew the priesthood (you would think) unless you're going to have a new temple. So that's built in. Commenting on the priests' clothing of Exodus 28 (this is where the priests' clothing originally is designed and created, back in the book of Exodus), Lee writes this:

Throughout the whole chapter in Exod. 28, the high priestly clothes are described as glorious and sacred by precious stones attached to the clothes and the turban of the high priest which is associated with an important function to remove the guilt of the Israelites incurred in the holy offering by 'a rosette of pure gold' on the front of the turban in Exod. 28:36-38 (cf. Num. 18:1). Accordingly, maintaining

the sanctity of the high priest's garment and his turban as a part of the garment is important for carrying out the priestly duty to remove the guilt of others.

That's why you have a priesthood.

Moving to Zechariah 4 (the very next chapter), Lee writes this. So we've got the cleansing of Joshua the high priest and the garments. Then we hit chapter 4 and Lee writes:

The rebuilding of the New Jerusalem/Temple is also emphasized in the fifth vision [MH: Zechariah] (4:1-14) [MH: so we get it alluded to in Zechariah because of the priest and cleaning him up, and now we get it in this chapter] by the encouragement of Zerubbabel [this is Zechariah 4:9]: 'The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house [MH: so Zerubbabel started rebuilding the temple]; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you' (4:9).

The work, though... What about this completion? Because did they really complete...? And you've got to throw Haggai and, of course, Zechariah in there until you get the second temple. We get that. But look at what follows. Zechariah 4 says, "The work will not be completed by his (Zerubbabel's) might, nor by his power..." And Zerubbabel is the David figure. He's descended from David "...but only by God's Spirit" will this be accomplished (Zechariah 4:6). Only by the Spirit of God will this temple be completed.

The Temple rebuilding is accomplished by divine power... on the one hand, a Davidic king such as Zerubbabel is assigned as the agent of the rebuilding of the New Temple/Jerusalem. On the other hand [MH: and this is something, unless you're reading Zechariah really closely, you'd never see], Joshua, the high priest is used to remove the guilt of Israel which caused the destruction of the first Jerusalem/Temple. Both figures appear to overlap in the person of Joshua because of the crowning of Joshua in [MH: Zechariah] 6:9-13...

1:15:00

Now did you catch that? You've got Zerubbabel (king figure—the David figure) and you've got Joshua (the high priest). If you're thinking back to David Mitchell's session on Messiah ben Joseph and the Joshua language, good for you because this is part of it. But anyway, you've got two figures here: a priest figure and a king figure. But who gets crowned to complete this task in Zechariah 6:9-13? Let me read it to you. It's not Zerubbabel, which is the crazy thing. It's the priest. So Zechariah 6:9-13 says this. ESV has this section marked as "The Crown and the Temple."

⁹ And the word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁰ "Take from the exiles Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon, and go the same day to

the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah. ¹¹ Take from them silver and gold, and make a crown, and set it on the head of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. ¹² And say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD. ¹³ It is he who shall build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.'"

So the crazy thing is:

The crowning of Joshua is a sign for the coming Branch which symbolizes the Davidic king. The Davidic king will coexist with the high priest by "the peaceful understanding between the two of them" (vs. 13b). He will come and build the New Temple (vss. 12-13).

And that's what happens in verses 12-13: "... he shall build the temple of the Lord. It is he who shall build the temple of the Lord... There shall be a priest on his throne." Now what we have here is we have a new priesthood. This is Old Testament prophecy. Think about it. We have a new priesthood. We've got the people returned. They're cleansed from exile. We've got a new priesthood. We've got a temple that ultimately is going to be built by God's Spirit and a priest who's crowned king, who is referred to as the Branch, whose arrival leads to the completion of a new temple project. Does that sound like anybody we know? It sounds an awful lot like Jesus. It sounds an awful lot like the returned messiah.

So here again we have a conflation of all these ideas merging not into a building and then that's it. They merge into a person. What temple does this priest, who is Jesus, preside over? I'll tell you what temple it is. It's the temple of his body. It's the temple... Like all the other prophets say, it's the people of God.

Now a lot more could be said about all of this (we're going to wrap up here), about all four Prophets and other things. Again, this is Lee's dissertation. It's been made into a book if you're interested in the topic. But this should be sufficient. The new Jerusalem of Revelation 21-22 absorbs temple expectation. That is, the expectation of the ultimate end of exile, ultimate forgiveness, restoration of the dwelling place of God with his people, both in terms of a temple, but the land at large—really the world, because there are no more nations to harass Israel. They've been judged. Chaos is over. He's the king of the whole world. All of these things are fulfilled in Rev 21-22 by means of the new Jerusalem and the new earth. You have the new Jerusalem, which itself is linked to the new global Eden.

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And this isn't spiritualized interpretation. It's Old Testament. [laughs] It's taking the Old Testament merger... The Old Testament is the one that merges these things, in four Prophets. You've got four examples here. And the examples could easily be tripled if we went through Lee's whole dissertation. Okay? It's the Old Testament that merges these ideas that have to do with new creation, new priesthood, presence of the messiah, a new earth, and the people of God with the messiah returned to earth. There's nothing going on in Revelation 21-22's vision of the new earth or new creation whose temple is the Body of Christ (in other words, Christ himself) whose roots cannot be found in the Old Testament. It's all there.

And so next time, we're going to take a look at the chapter and go through it in more granular detail and pull out some specific Old Testament things. But this is the precursor. This is the Old Testament precedent. So if you have wondered why we get such weird, abstract descriptions of the new city... Why is it so big? I mean, it's grotesquely big. It's impossibly big. And you know, it covers so much land and territory. And what's up with this "no more nations" and the sea being "no more"? Again, all these things are designed to not be read literally, but to be read as more than literally. They're designed to be read in light of what the Old Testament does with temple language and the temple concepts. It doesn't mean that the Lord's not returning physically to earth. It doesn't mean that we won't see an earthly reign of Christ. We will. Again, I'm not going to rabbit-trail back into Revelation 19. Okay? The amillennialist system looks great except for the stuff they skip or don't deal with, and so does the dispensational premillennial system. It looks great unless you're looking at other things where it doesn't look so great. All the systems cheat. That's just the way it is. And nobody's going to arrest anybody for it, but that's just the way it is.

So what we need to do is we need to observe the fact that the Old Testament throws all of this in the hopper. It all goes into the same bucket. And these ideas get conflated with each other. Prophecies and the content of Revelation 21-22 was never supposed to be read as the fulfillment of *one* building project. They are to be read as the culmination—the consummation—of God's entire plan for his body, the one family of God, and everything else (the end of chaos, all these things). So however we do that, that's our task—however we articulate that. We are not slaves to theological vocabulary or a system. We just want to look at what's there and try to think about it. And that's what our aim will be in the next episode.

TS: Alright, Mike. Looking forward to Part 2, wrapping it up finally. Don't forget, you've still got a chance to send me your Revelation question. We're going to do a whole Q&A on Revelation, Mike. We've got lots of questions. This is your last chance to get them in. And looking forward to wrapping it up. And with that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.