



ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS -
GRAND THEMES 1 - DWELLING

A thick black L-shaped frame surrounds the text. The top-left corner is a horizontal bar extending to the right, and the bottom-right corner is a vertical bar extending upwards. The text is centered within the open space of the frame.

WELCOME TO “GRAND THEMES”

Each week we will trace a major theme through the
whole Bible.

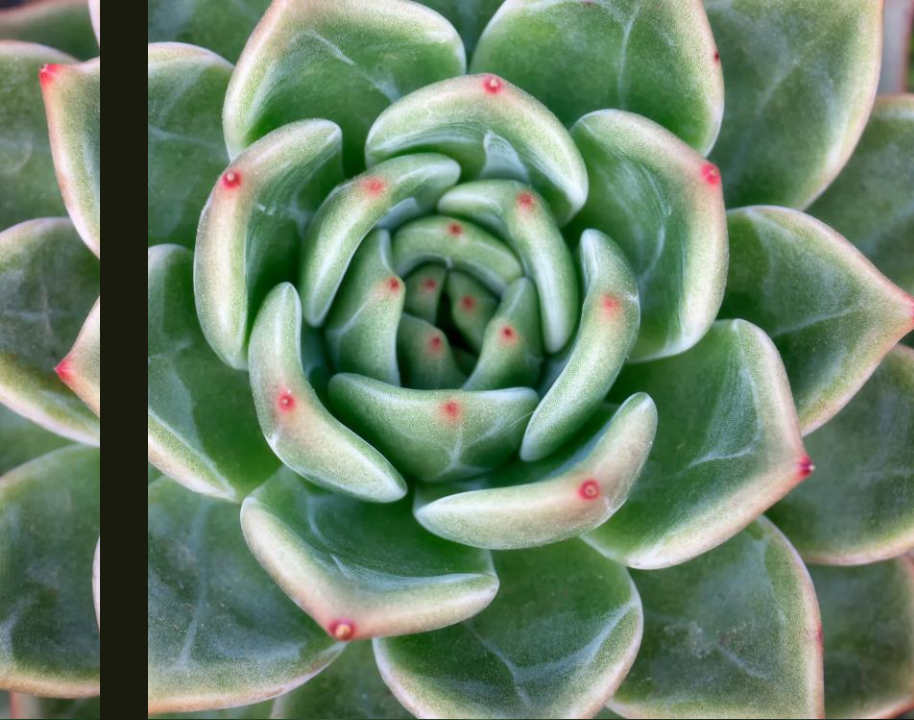
A stylized black icon of a classical temple with a triangular pediment and three columns. The text is centered within the pediment area.

TEMPLE: GOD
MEETS HUMANS

Theme gallery



TEMPLE



Garden

- Genesis 3:8–9 (HCSB): Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and they hid themselves from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 So the Lord God called out to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”
- God “in the garden” with His image-bearing humans.
- However Adam and Eve disobeyed God and had to leave the garden.
- Genesis 3:22–24 (HCSB): The Lord God said, “Since man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live forever.” 23 So the Lord God sent him away from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove man out and **stationed the cherubim** and the flaming, whirling sword **east** of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life.

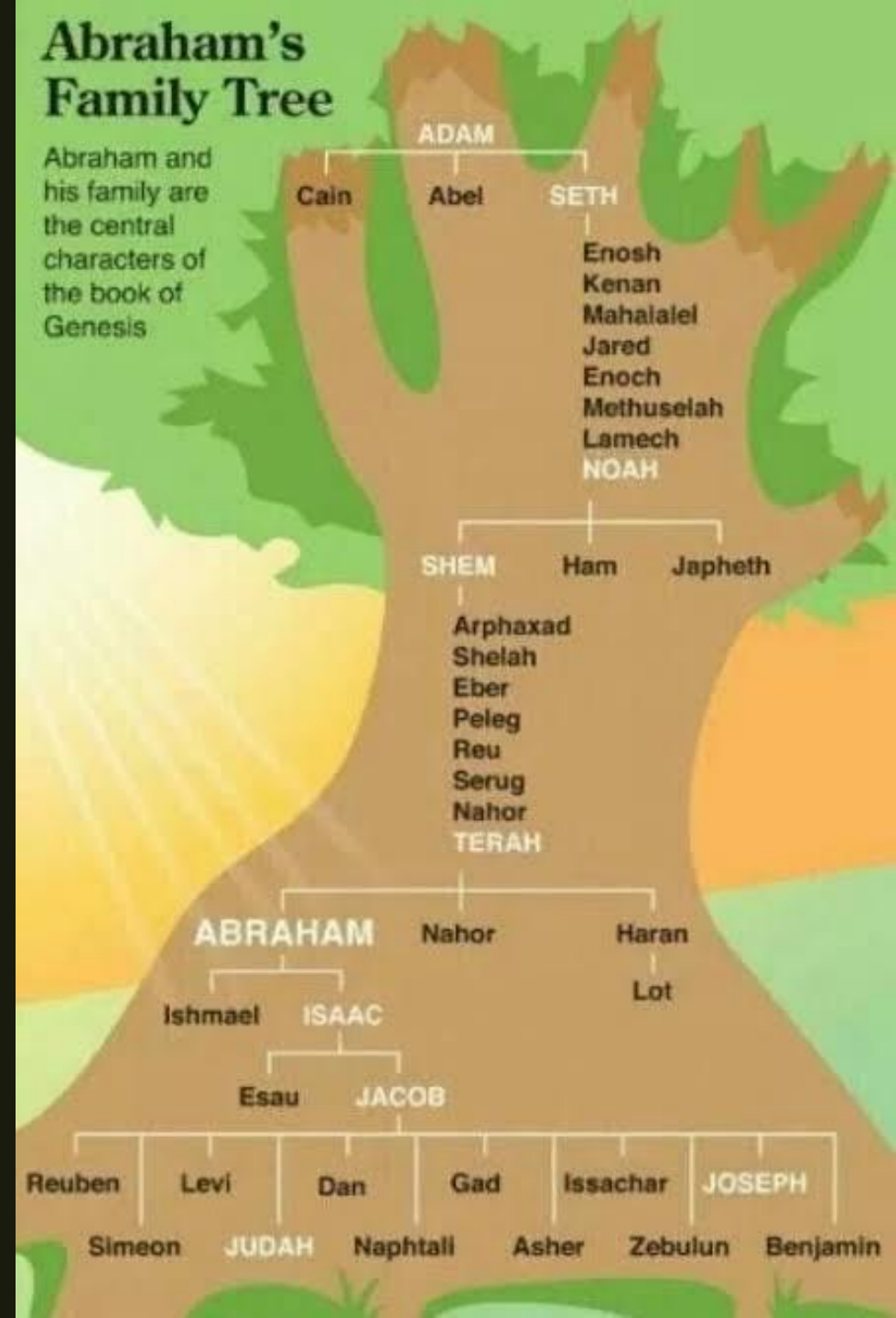


Garden Questions

- Thinking about the “garden incident”, what do you learn about God’s being with the humans?

Reboot - Abraham

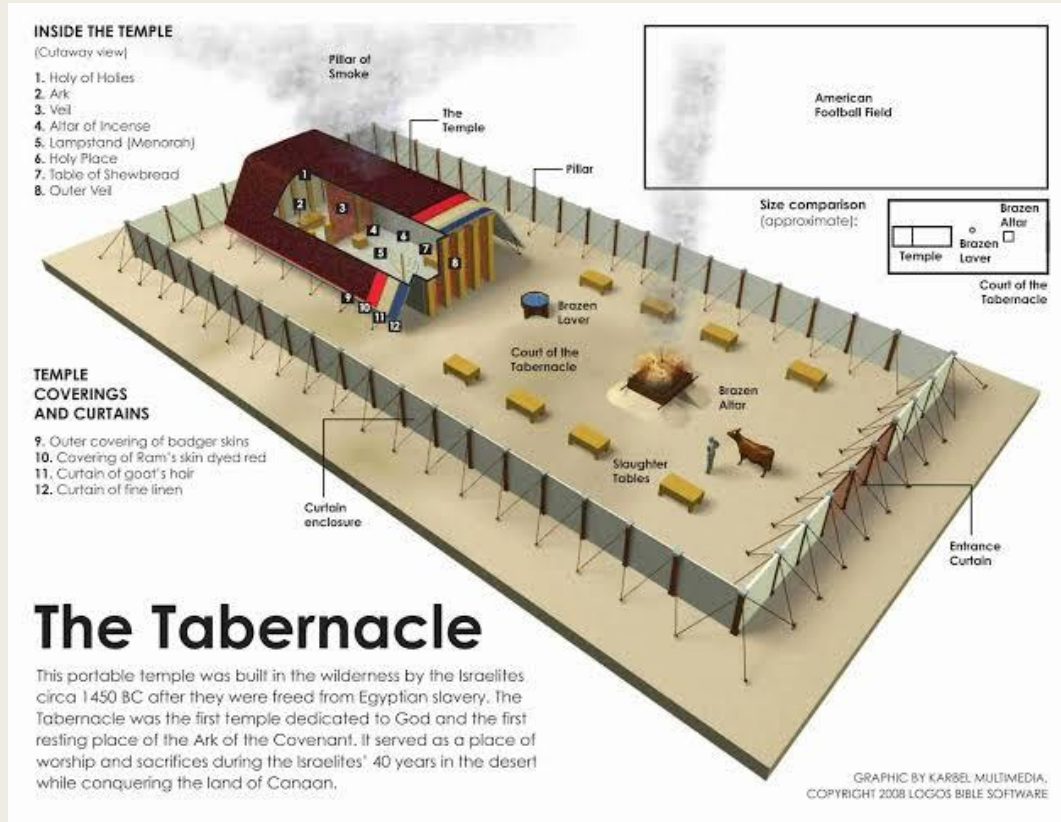
- God chooses Abraham to “bless all nations” through his family line and to give the land of Canaan to his offspring. (Gen 12:1-12)
- God makes a covenant with Abraham
- Abraham/Isaac/Jacob (Gen 12-50)
- Abraham goes to Egypt because of a famine.
- Jacob’s son Joseph becomes COO in Egypt.
- The Hebrews multiply over 400 years and then the Pharaoh of the day enslaves them.
- God raises up Moses to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt.



Tabernacle (mobile temple)

- (Exodus 25:8) They are to make a sanctuary for Me so that I may **dwell** among them.
- (Exodus 29:45) I will **dwell** among the Israelites and be their God.
- (Exodus 29:46) And they will know that I am Yahweh their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, so that I might **dwell** among them. I am Yahweh their God.

Tabernacle



The Tabernacle

This portable temple was built in the wilderness by the Israelites circa 1450 BC after they were freed from Egyptian slavery. The Tabernacle was the first temple dedicated to God and the first resting place of the Ark of the Covenant. It served as a place of worship and sacrifices during the Israelites' 40 years in the desert while conquering the land of Canaan.

- <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=ceZHlc55HCg>
- Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the **lampstand** and the **table with its consecrated bread**; this was called the **Holy Place**. Behind the second curtain was a room called the **Most Holy Place**, which had the golden **altar of incense** and the **gold-covered ark of the covenant**. This ark contained the gold jar of **manna**, **Aaron's staff** that had budded, and the **stone tablets of the covenant**. Above the ark were the **cherubim** of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now. (Heb 9:1-5)
- Want more details? Ex 26-27, 36-40
- The **Glory of the Lord** filled the tabernacle when it was completed. (Ex 40:34)



Leviticus

- Regulations around sacrifices
- Purity Laws (clean/unclean)
- Laws and operations of the priests.
- Dealing with defilement – bodily fluids, skin diseases
- Day of atonement, scapegoat(Lev 16)
- Laws governing sexual ethics, property, general ethics
- Laws for priests
- Festivals and Sabbath
- Rewards and punishment
- Not following the regs = dangerous!
- Making it possible for God to dwell among them.

Leviticus

- The LORD said to Moses, “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘I am the LORD your God. **You must not do as they do in Egypt**, where you used to live, and you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices. You must obey my laws and be careful to follow my decrees. I am the LORD your God. Keep my decrees and laws, for the person who obeys them will live by them. I am the LORD (Lev 18:1-3)
- The LORD said to Moses, “Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: ‘**Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.** (Lev 19:1-3)
- I will look on you with favor and make you **fruitful and increase your numbers**, and I will keep my **covenant** with you. You will still be eating last year’s harvest when you will have to move it out to make room for the new. **I will put my dwelling place among you**, and I will not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people. (Lev 26:9-12)



Tabernacle Questions

- What do we learn from the tabernacle about God dwelling with humans ?
- What are we picking up about why all the purity laws and sacrifices etc?

God leaving...

- She (wife of Phinehas) named the boy Ichabod, saying, “**The Glory has departed from Israel**”— because of the capture of the ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband. She said, “The Glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured. (1 Sam 4:21-22).
- A low point in Israel’s history.
- Presence of God linked with “Glory”
- Glory – riches/splendour



Solomon's Temple



- Now that the Israelites were in the promised land, they did not need to travel around any more.
- David wanted to build a temple but God did not let him. His son Solomon built it instead (1 Kings 6)
- The word of the LORD came to Solomon: “As for this temple you are building, **if** you follow my decrees, observe my laws and keep all my commands and obey them, I will fulfill through you the promise I gave to David your father. ***And I will live among the Israelites and will not abandon my people Israel.***
- What would happen if they didn't follow God's decrees?

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE - ILLUSTRATED

1 KINGS 6

Three level structure built around the temple.
Lower level is 7.5 ft. wide.
Middle level is 9 ft. wide.
Upper level is 10.5 ft. wide

Wooden Doors overlaid with gold

The nave with clerstory windows

Vestibule - 30 ft. wide and 15 ft. deep.

Hollow bronze pillar on north called "Boaz" and one on the south called "Jachin".

Wooden Doors overlaid with gold

Bronze altar 30 ft. by 15 ft., for burnt offerings.

Inner sanctuary is a 30' cube.
Ark of the Covenant in the middle with two massive 15' golden cherubim on either side.

The nave was 60' long and 30' wide.
There is a golden altar and golden table.
There are five golden lampstands on the north and five on the south.

Ten bronze wheeled stands with basins of water to rinse off ashes from burnt offerings.

Metal basin 15 ft. in diameter and 7.5 ft. high holding 12,000 gallons of water, supported by twelve bronze oxen in sets of three.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Solomon began to build the "House of the Lord" in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah in the Spring of 967 or 966 B.C. and completed it seven years later. It resided in the middle of a court with boundary wall.

Solomon's Temple

- <https://youtu.be/y2tha7ogp ec?si=dB7I6czhxHqJ4n3w>
- Similar layout to the tabernacle.
- Increasingly holy (and dangerous) space as the priest approaches God's presence.

Conditions

- When Solomon had finished building the temple of the LORD and the royal palace, and had achieved all he had desired to do, the LORD appeared to him a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. The LORD said to him: “I have heard the prayer and plea you have made before me; I have consecrated this temple, which you have built, by putting my Name there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there. “As for you, **if you walk before me faithfully** with integrity of heart and uprightness, as David your father did, and do all I command and observe my decrees and laws, I will **establish** your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, ‘You shall never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.’”
- **But** if you or your descendants turn away from me and **do not observe** the commands and decrees I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will **reject this temple** I have consecrated for my Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. This temple will become a heap of **rubble**. All who pass by will be appalled and will scoff and say, ‘Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?’ People will answer, ‘**Because they have forsaken the LORD** their God, who brought their ancestors out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them—that is why the LORD brought all this disaster on them.’ (1 Kings 9:1-9)



God leaves again...



- Babylon destroys Jerusalem and temple 586 BC
- Remnant carried off to Babylon (By the rivers of Babylon...)
- Ezekiel 10:18–19 (HCSB): Then **the glory of the Lord moved away from the threshold of the temple** and stood above the cherubim. 19 The cherubim lifted their wings and ascended from the earth right before my eyes; the wheels were beside them as they went. The glory of the God of Israel was above them, and it stood at the entrance to the eastern gate of the Lord's house....
- Ezekiel 11:22–25 (HCSB): Then the cherubim, with the wheels beside them, lifted their wings, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. 23 The glory of the Lord rose up from within the city and stood on the mountain east of the city. 24 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me to **Chaldea** and to the exiles in a vision from the Spirit of God. After the vision I had seen left me, 25 I spoke to the exiles about all the things the Lord had shown me
- God has left the building!

Temple rebuilt



- After the exile - Haggai/Zechariah
- Haggai 1:3–5 (HCSB): The word of the Lord came through Haggai the prophet: 4 “Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?” 5 Now, the Lord of Hosts says this: “Think carefully about your ways:
- Zechariah 8:1–3 (HCSB): The word of the Lord of Hosts came: 2 “The Lord of Hosts says this: I am extremely jealous for Zion; I am jealous for her with great wrath.” 3 The Lord says this: “**I will return to Zion and live in Jerusalem.** Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, the mountain of the Lord of Hosts, and the Holy Mountain.”
- Temple rebuilt. Restoring of justice. Looking to the future...



Hebrew Bible Questions

- What has struck you so far about the idea of God dwelling with man?
- What's need from the humans for God to dwell with them?

The Word dwells among us - Jesus



John 1:14 (HCSB): The Word became flesh
and took up residence among us.

We observed His **glory**,
the glory as the One and Only Son from the Father,
full of grace and truth.

What is John saying here?

Destruction of “the temple”

- Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” They replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?” **But the temple he had spoken of was his body.** After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken. (Jn 2:19-22).
- So was this “temple destruction” a good thing or bad thing?

Temples of the Holy Spirit – God dwelling in us.



- Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple. (1 Cor 3:16)
- What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For **we are the temple of the living God**. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." Therefore, "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." (2 Cor 6:17-18)
- How should "the temple" be managed?

Temples of the Holy Spirit – God dwelling in us.



- On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. **Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.** (Jn 7:37-39)
- You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. **And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ** (Rom 8:9)

Growing understanding about the role of the temple



- Stephen's speech in Acts 7
- After receiving the **tabernacle**, our ancestors under Joshua brought it with them when they took the land from the nations God drove out before them. It remained in the land until the time of David, who enjoyed God's favor and asked that he might provide a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. But it was Solomon who built a house for him. **“However, the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands. As the prophet says:“Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.What kind of house will you build for me?says the Lord.Or where will my resting place be?Has not my hand made all these things?”** (Acts 7:44-50)

New heavens and earth – no need for a temple



Revelation 21:1–4 (HCSB): Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea no longer existed. 2 I also saw the Holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.

3 Then I heard a loud voice from the throne:

Look! God's dwelling is with humanity, and He will live with them.

They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them

and be their God.

4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will no longer exist;

grief, crying, and pain will exist no longer,

because the previous things have passed away



Temple Questions

- Is there any personal application of this?
- What have you learnt?



Reflection

- Why do you think God has made this promise to dwell in the heart of his followers?
- If I am to be a temple, how should I then be living?
- What does it mean to me that God's Spirit can live in me?
- Am I tuned in to this idea?
- Has it helped to look at the theme of "temple" through the whole Bible?