



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Eph. 2:19-22

1. We (You) Are God's Temple (Eph. 2:19-22)

- a. "You are...fellow citizens with the saints, & members of God's household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building, being put together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you are also being built together for God's dwelling in the Spirit." (Eph. 2:19-22 CSB)
- b. Eden, a Garden-Temple (Gen. 1-3)
 - a. The 'garden of God' (Ezek. 28:13) – it's God's garden
 - a. "You were in Eden, the garden of God... You were on the holy mountain of God..." (Ezek. 28:13a, 14b)
 - b. Ezek. 28 is a prophecy about the city of 'Tyre' (Ezek. 28:1). Our point is simply that Eden is called "the garden of God."
 - c. "In the light of...numerous...parallels between Eden and Israel's [later] tabernacle & temple, it should not be unexpected to find that Ezekiel 28...refer[s] to 'Eden, the garden of God...the holy mountain of God'." [G. K. Beale, "Adam as the 1st Priest in Eden as the Garden Temple," SBJ of Theology, 22.2 (2018) p. 13]
 - d. "The Garden of Eden is not simply a beautiful green space...to provide food... More than anything...it is sacred space that reflects the fact that God is dwelling there." [John H. Walton, Lost World of Adam & Eve, p.]
 - e. "The creation narrative...has a striking connection to the tabernacle & temple [as] the dwelling place of God... The temple & tabernacle can be seen as 'reflections & recapitulations' of the first temple, the Garden of Eden. Both garden & temple are the place of God's unique presence on earth: God walks with Adam in the garden, he comes to meet with his people in the tabernacle..." [Jennifer Allen Craft, Place-making & the Arts: Christian Life, p. 126]
 - f. "We...conclude that the Garden [of Eden] was...a type of sacred space." [Daniel C. Timmer, Creation, Tabernacle..., p. 86]
 - a. It's God's Garden-Temple—for God (Ps. 48:1-3; 43:3)
 - a. "Great is the LORD & greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain...is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion...the city of the great King. Within her citadels God has made himself known as a fortress." (Ps. 48:1-3)
 - b. "Send your light &...truth; let them lead me. Let them bring me to your holy mountain, to your dwelling place." (Ps. 43:3)
 - c. "The Garden of Eden was not, strictly speaking, a garden for humanity, but the garden of God (Isa. 51:3; Ezek. 28:13). The Garden of Eden is not viewed by [Genesis'] author...as...farmland, but as an archetypical sanctuary [temple], i.e., a place where God dwells & where man should worship him. Many...features of the Garden may...be...found later [in] the tabernacle or Jerusalem temple...[In] Genesis 2 Eden is the place of God's presence or the Holy of Holies of the cosmic temple." [John H. Walton, Ancient Near Eastern Thought & the OT, p.]
 - d. "The most central truth to the [Genesis'] creation account is that this world is a place for God's presence. Though all of the functions...meet... the needs of humanity, the cosmic Temple is [God-centered]." [J. Walton, Lost World..., pp. 83-4]
 - b. Man is Not the Center & Meaning of the Universe

- a. "O I'm a man—I'm the meaning of the universe; Yes, I'm a man—I'm the meaning of the universe. God made me such, I am so much; I'm the center & the meaning of the universe." [Hymns, #1293, Preaching...the High Gospel, Ch. 7, St. 6]
 - b. "In an anthropocentric [man-centered] world view the world [cosmos] was created for human beings, &...the human being is the crown of creation." [Brock Bingaman, All Things New, p. 170]
 - c. "Humans, the last...to be created, have a unique role...But they do not come last because they are the climax of an ascending scale...The seventh day (rather than the creation of humans) is the true culmination of the work of creation...The view...that the rest of creation was created for the sake of humans, finds no support in the [biblical] text." [Richard Bauckham, Bible in the Contemporary World, pp. 81-82]
 - d. J. "Moltmann...insists that an anthropocentric [man-centered] view of the world is 'unbiblical' and that the creation exists not for humanity, but for God's glory." [Celia E. Deane-Drummond, Ecology in J. Moltmann's Theology, p. 190]
 - e. "The creation of humanity [Gen. 1:26-8] immediately precedes God's...final blessing [(Gen. 2:3) wherein]...God blesses and sanctifies...the 7th day. Whereas the creation of human beings on day 6 functions as the climax of God's creative act in the material realm, the narrative culminates in God finishing His work through the incorporation of Sabbath—sacred time—into the very order of creation...The order of creation...[is] driven by a theo-centric [God-centered] goal: all creation is to glorify God." [J.J. Johnson Leese, Christ, Creation & the Cosmic Goal of Redemption, pp. 94-95]
 - f. "Genesis 1:1 points to & reaches its climax in Gen. 2:2-3, the seventh day of creation. The whole world is made for, & moves towards Shabbat, which is God's shalom...The Sabbath is the real [climax] of creation, & not, as is so often said, human beings (made on the same day as the other animals!)...The goal of Creation is...the Sabbath: not simply human life, but human life in God's service." [Paul M. Van Buren, Theology of the Jewish-Christian Reality, p. 56]
 - g. "Genesis 1:1-2:4 does not...recognize the climax of creation in the creation of man. Gen. 2:2-3 is a fitting capstone [to]...Gen. 1:1-2:3...On the 7th day God declared his work officially completed...This can only indicate that the goal of creation is not mankind, that the [climax] of creation is not man, but that all creative activities of God flow into the universal rest period...Man takes his place at his allotted position within creation. God's last creative act is not the making of man, but the creation of...[Sabbath]." [H. Dressler in D. A. Carson From Sabbath to Lord's Day, pp. 29-30]
- b. A place where God dwells – a sacred space (Gen. 3:8)
- a. "The man & his wife heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden [during] the evening breeze..." (Gen. 3:8)
 - a. It was a sanctuary (Ezek. 28:13-14, 18) Ezek. calls Eden the 'garden of God.' It is also called "the holy mountain of God" (Ezek. 28:14) a phrase often used to describe Zion, Jerusalem, God's city & God's Temple (Ps. 2:6; 15:1; 24:3; 48:1, etc.)
 - b. Its entrance faced east & was guarded by cherubim (Gen. 3:24)
 - b. God "drove the man out & stationed the cherubim & the flaming, whirling sword east of the Garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life." (Gen. 3:24)
 - c. "Eden was commonly perceived [by Jewish scholars] as an archetype of the Temple." [Lifsa Schachtar, "Garden of Eden as God's First Sanctuary," Jewish Bible Quarterly, 2, 41.2 (2013) p.]
- c. Humans satisfied in God's presence (Gen. 2)
- a. "The Temple...in the OT was the unique place...where Israel...experience[d] [God's] presence. Israel's temple was...[where] the priest experienced God's unique presence, & Eden was the place where Adam walked & talked with God. The same Hebrew [word] used for God's 'walking back & forth' in the Garden (Gen 3:8), also describes God's presence in the tabernacle." [G. K. Beale, "...Eden as the Garden Temple," SBJ of Theology, 22.2 (2018) p. 10]
 - b. "Eden paints a compelling picture of the satisfaction of basic human desires in God's presence. The desire for life is satisfied by the waters of the River of Life & the fruit of the Tree of Life. The need for purpose is fulfilled in Adam's priestly call to work & keep the garden-Temple". [G. K. Beale, Mitchell Kim, God Dwells Among Us, p. 19]
- d. God & humans dwell together – humans are invited into God's garden to be in relationship with him in his sacred space
- e. Humans blessed to expand Eden (garden-temple) (Gen. 1:28)
- a. Gen. 1:28 says "God blessed them...Be fruitful & multiply, & fill the earth, & subdue it; & rule over the fish...the birds, and over every living thing..." As [Adam] was to...rule...& subdue the earth, he was to extend the geographical boundaries to the Garden of Eden until Eden extended throughout and covered the whole earth. This meant the presence of God that was limited to Eden was to be extended throughout the whole earth. God's presence was to 'fill' the entire earth." [G. K. Beale, "...Eden as the Garden Temple," SBJ of Theology, 22.2 (2018) p. 11]
 - b. "People were gradually supposed to extend the garden as they went about subduing and ruling [in order to] extend the...sacred space." [John Walton]
 - c. "If people were going to 'fill the earth' [according to Gen. 1:28]...we should surmise that people were gradually supposed to extend the garden as they went about subduing & ruling. Extending the garden would extend the food supply as well as extend sacred space (since that is what the garden represented)." [John Walton, Genesis, p. 186]
- c. The Tabernacle & Temple are Mini-Edens
- a. The tabernacle
- a. A place for God to dwell—"They are to make a sanctuary for me so that I may dwell among them" (Exo. 25:8)
 - b. A mini-Eden
 - a. "The Tabernacle...is where God dwells...Various details of the Tabernacle suggest it is a mini Eden. The parallels include the east-facing entrance guarded by cherubim, the gold, the Tree of Life (lampstand)..." ESV Study Bible
 - b. Eden was the garden of God & God's presence was the central aspect of the garden. Eden is...where God was to be found...[So] the garden is sacred space, as was the later temple in Israel." [W. J. Dumbrell, Covenant & Creation, p.]
 - c. "When Adam & Eve sinned, they were cast out of the garden, lost their access to sacred space...The plan of the tabernacle (& later, the temple) was designed to reestablish equilibrium in a sacred space—God's presence on earth...The [tabernacle's] design was reminiscent of Eden with the cherub decor, the Table of the presence (...food as in Eden), & the menorah [lampstand], which...represents the tree of life. As Exodus 40 describes the glory of the Lord filling the [tabernacle], the Israelites experience what is, in

effect, a return to Eden—not in the sense of full restoration, but...God's presence again takes up its residence among people, & access to God's presence, [tho'] limited, is restored." [John H. Walton, "Equilibrium & Sacred compass," *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, 11.2, pp. 295-296]

- d. "Bible scholars assert that: "[1.] Eden was, on the basis of its symbolism...the place where God was and where created humanity should be. [2.] Eden was the prototypical temple [Tabernacle]...[3.] [God's residence] in the tent of meeting [tabernacle] provides a community of God and humankind that the world has not seen since the first man & woman were driven [out] from Eden." [Daniel C. Timmer, *Creation, Tabernacle, & Sabbath*, p. 41]

b. The Temple

- a. A place for God to dwell—"I will dwell among the Israelites & not abandon my people Israel." (1 Kings 6:13) A mini-Eden (1 Kings 6:18, 29, 32; 7:18-20)
- a. 18 "The cedar paneling inside the temple was carved with ornamental gourds & flower blossoms... 29 He carved all the surrounding temple walls with carved engravings—cherubim, palm trees, & flower blossoms—in the inner & outer sanctuaries...32 The two doors were made of olive wood. He carved cherubim, palm trees, & flower blossoms on them & overlaid them with gold, hammering gold over the cherubim & palm trees." (1 Kings 6:18, 29, 32)
- b. The "Old Testament...identifies Solomon's Temple...with a 'garden' or garden-type depictions in order to identify them with Eden." [G. K. Beale, *Temple & the Church's Mission*, p. 72]
- c. "That the Garden of Eden was the 1st temple is...suggested by observing that [Solomon's] later Temple had wood carvings which gave it a garden-like atmosphere & likely were intentional reflections of Eden: 1 Kings 6:18, 29 says there was "cedar...carved in the shape of gourds & open flowers" (v. 18); "on the walls of the temple round about" & on the wood doors of the inner sanctuary were "carvings of cherubim, palm trees, & open flowers" (v. 29, 32, 35); beneath the heads of the 2 pillars placed at the entrance of the holy place were "carved pomegranates" (1 Kings 7:18-20)." [G. K. Beale, "...Eden as the Garden Temple," *SBJ of Theology*, 22.2 (2018) p. 11]

d. Jesus is the True Tabernacle & Temple (John 1:14; 2:19, 21)

- a. "The Word became flesh and dwelt [tabernacle] among us." (John 1:14)
- b. "Jesus replied, 'Destroy this temple & I'll raise it up in 3 days.'...He spoke about the temple of his body." (Jn. 2:19, 21)
- c. "Israel's tabernacle & temple [were] an organic development of the...garden sanctuary in Eden...Israel's temple was a foreshadowing of Christ & his people as the new, end-time temple...inaugurated at Christ's first coming &...[to] be consummated at his final coming." [G. K. Beale, "...Eden as the Garden Temple," *SBJ of Theology*, 22.2 (2018) p. 19]
- d. "Jesus is portrayed by the Gospels as a [Temple]...the place where...people come & find themselves renewed & restored as the people of the one God." [Tom Wright, *How God became King*, p. 236]

e. The Church is the Temple of God – mini-Eden (Eph. 2:21-22)

a. We are walking temples

- a. "A temple is where God dwells (Eph. 2:21?22, 1 Cor. 6:19). N. T. Wright emphasizes that the...Temple was 'the place where heaven & earth meet.' Heaven & earth are not 'separated by a great gulf. Instead they overlap & interlock... so that God makes his presence known, seen & heard within...the sphere of earth.'...So every moment is a sacred [moment] as heaven & earth meet within us. We are walking temples." [Jan Johnson, *Meeting God in Scripture*, p. 50]
- b. "Eph. 2:20-22 asserts that the Church...is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you are also being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.' The Church is growing & expanding in Christ throughout the... 'Age [of Grace,] so' that God's saving presence & the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known' even 'in the heavenly places' (Eph 3:10)." [G. K. Beale, "...Eden as the Garden Temple," *SBJ of Theology*, 22.2 (2018) p. 21]

b. On mission with God (Gen. 1:28; Matt. 28:19; 1 Pet. 2:5a, 9)

- a. "God blessed them, &...told them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, & subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, & every creature that crawls on the earth'." (Gen. 1:28)
- b. "Go...make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father &...the Son &...the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:19)
- c. "You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house...that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Pet 2:5a, 9)
- d. "Our...task as [the] Church,...God's temple...filled with his presence, is that we expand the temple of his presence & fill the earth with that glorious presence until God finally accomplishes this goal..." [G. K. Beale, "...Eden as the Garden Temple," *SBJ of Theology*, 22.2 (2018) p. 22]
- e. Multiple "biblical metaphors of the church... Yet all the church is & does can be described in one phrase. 'You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation...so that you may proclaim the praises of the One who called...' (1 Pet. 2:9)...The...metaphors...convey...multifarious [aspects] of the church. But, there is basically one mission: to 'proclaim the praises...' We praise God to God...worship; we praise God to each other...edification, instruction...we praise God to the world...with our words (evangelism) and our deeds (mercy & justice...)." [Tim. Keller, *Serving a Movement*, p.]
- f. "This mission did not begin in Matthew 28:19. The heartbeat of God's mission began in Genesis 1." [G. K. Beale, Mitchell Kim, *God Dwells Among Us: Expanding Eden to the Ends of the Earth*, p. 16]

- g. "The command to 'fill the earth' implies that the earth is not yet filled...While the boundaries of the garden are clearly delineated (Gen. 2:10-14),...God wanted to expand that sacred space & dwelling place from the limited confines of the Garden-temple of Eden to fill the entire earth." [G. K. Beale, Mitchell Kim, *God Dwells Among Us*, p. 34]

f. New Heaven & Earth—God's Ultimate Garden-Temple (Rev. 21:1-3, 10, 22)

- a. "I saw a new heaven & a new earth...2 I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God ...3 ...I heard a loud voice from the throne: 'Look, God's dwelling [Tabernacle] is with humanity, and he will live

with them...' He...showed me the holy city, Jerusalem...I did not see a temple in it, because the Lord God the Almighty & the Lamb are its temple...He showed me the river of the water of life...[&] the tree of life...' (Rev. 21:1-3, 10, 22; 22:1-2)

- b. "The new heavens & earth in Rev. 21:1-22:5 are...described as a temple because the temple—which equals God's presence—encompasses the whole earth because of the work of Christ. At the very end of time, the true temple will come down completely from heaven & fill the whole creation (...Rev 21:1-3, 10: 21:22...). The new creation is...an escalated Eden...Garden-Temple because...the garden-temple [has] expanded over the whole earth." [G. K. Beale, "...Eden as the Garden Temple," SBJ of Theology, 22.2 (2018) p. 19]