The GLORY of God and the Temple

THE BIBLICAL TEXT –

1 Now it came about when the king lived in his house, and the LORD had given him rest on every side from all his enemies, 2 that the king said to Nathan the prophet, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells within tent curtains.' 3 And Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that is in your mind, for the LORD is with you.' 4 But it came about in the same night that the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, 5 'Go and say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD, 'Are you the one who should build Me a house to dwell in? 6 For I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the sons of Israel from Egypt, even to this day; but I have been moving about in a tent, even in a tabernacle'” (2 Sam. 7:1-6).

The Tabernacle speaks to the wanderings of the people of God. The Temple will speak to their permanency. God would establish for Himself a place where He would dwell with His people for their joy.

King David would not be the one to build the Temple, but his son Solomon. The Temple would go through various stages of existence. First, there is Solomon’s Temple built around 966BC. The Babylonians would destroy this Temple in 586 BC. The Nation of Israel would return to their land in 536 and rebuild the Post-Exilic Temple in 520BC. King Herod would dismantle this Temple and rebuild the Temple for his own glory. This is the second Temple. Let us consider each.
God With Us
Temple Comparison

Solomon's Temple, finished in 957 BC, was less than one-half the size of Herod the Great's expanded Second Temple in Jerusalem, built in 20-19 BC.

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While the temple certainly has a history and integrity of its own, it was created by extension of the tabernacle and is associated with such diverse topics as a mountain and a city, the cosmos and a person's body, and God's glory and name. The biblical authors from Moses through Ezekiel and Haggai to John of Patmos never describe a complete temple, but offer a vision of what the temple was to be: the locus of the presence of God.

Offering a vision rather than a blueprint for the temple is in keeping with the inherent ambiguity of the concept "temple of the Lord," for how can the transcendent deity be localized in a building? The vision is also in keeping with the function of temple as a symbol. The temple is indeterminate literally and figuratively.

**The Preexistence of the Temple.** The foundation for temple is laid in the Pentateuch. Already in the patriarchs we find the promise of God's presence: "Do not be afraid, for I am with you, I will bless you" (Gen 26:24). How and where will this presence be mediated?

Although various locales were deemed sacred by virtue of God's presence (Gen 32:30), patriarchal religion did not put much importance on sacred space or the cultic practices that typify Mosaic Yahwism. Nevertheless, in various forms of foreshadowing, we find the usual lines of continuity with later persons, events, institutions, and practices Scripture's penchant for typology. Thus "Jerusalem," where centralization of the cult eventually took place, figures prominently in two key texts that address "cultic" issues: in Genesis 22 with the "binding" (sacrifice) of Isaac ("Moriah" cf. 2 Chron 3:1) and in Genesis 14 with the tithe paid to Melchizedek.

With Mosaic Yahwism a change in perspective and practice occurs. God appears to the newly created covenantal community, a community formed by the exodus and, now at Sinai (which parallels Jerusalem as a place par excellence for "visions" of God), given an identity, including instructions where Yahweh's presence with the full implication of both blessing and danger would be manifest (Exod. 24-26; 33:12-17).

How would God's presence in the covenant community and ceremony be evident? Inevitably certain symbols were necessary (despite the aniconic nature of Mosaic Yahwism Exod 20:4). The symbols appeal to the senses, but not simply as "visual aids." The ark, cherubim, and the tent of the meeting become the institutional representations of the Lord's presence among his people. Here, in this place, Yahweh appears and makes his will known (Exod 33:7-11).

The tent of the meeting in the Pentateuch, and the priestly tabernacle, is not, however, a projection (or retrojection!) of the temple, but an independent dwelling reflecting the life
of Israel prior to settlement and the centralization of worship. The tent is a "portable temple" of sorts, but not provisional nor simply a pattern; rather, the tent is a unique "dwelling."

With the ritual performances in the tabernacle/temple complex, and the personnel and attendant appurtenances, we come to a theologically significant point about temple practice: coming into the presence of a holy God. In each change of location, vestment, instrument, or ritual act, with their various gradations of importance, the "needs" of the people and the holiness of God come together: I am holy, it is holy, you are (to be) holy.

The extensions and the symbolic associations began early in the canonical literature. As a commentary on the Torah, Deuteronomy expresses the presence of Yahweh in the cult devoid of some simplistic equation of Yahweh's presence constrained by the natural order of cause and effect by utilizing his alter ego, his "name," as the manifestation of his transcendent reality. Even the ark itself is divested of its throne-like setting by its role as the "container" of the tablets of the law (Deut 10:1-5). Yahweh is not seated on a throne like some dowager duchess.

The paradoxical and symbolic nature of the temple is thus seen as the author(s) construct the parameters of temple theology: the transcendent deity graciously appears before his holy people in the place of his choosing, a dwelling symbolically rich by virtue of its ability to generate varied metaphoric associations (fire, cloud, tent, ark, and most especially "name" in the Pentateuch).

The Construction of the Temple. The construction of the temple began with David to serve as, at least on sociopolitical grounds, a "media event" of divine support and favor. David, however, was deterred from completing the task. No doubt sociopolitical forces played their usual role in this. The biblical authors were not oblivious to these explanations (1 Kings 5:13-18), but characteristically pass theological judgment (1 Chron 22:8-9), or, more important, God himself divulges his feelings on the matter: "Did I ever say Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" (2 Sam 7:7). God does not require an immutable dwelling, but the metaphoric associations are kept open, even those of monarchical justification (i.e., a "house" like the house in which the monarch resides).

The "cedar house" is ultimately built. And in Solomon's great prayer of dedication the paradox of this dwelling is acknowledged once again by his classic statement: "But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27). The paradox is softened by "quoting" the Deuteronomic "name" formula: "My Name shall be [in this place]" (v. 29). (This terminology underscores the point that the correspondence between God's presence and his "dwelling "tabernacle or templeis more "textual" than physical.) But what does the Lord think of this structure?
Solomon, like Bezalel before him with the building of the tabernacle, is described as having "wisdom." Unlike Bezalel, however, Solomon sends straightaway for supplies and instructions from Phoenician artisans. Moreover, a labor force is needed to complete the project, a force not unlike what the Israelites experienced in Egypt. Finally, Solomon is portrayed as the central figure in the planning and implementation of the project: "As for this temple that you are building" (1 Kings 6:12). No editorial judgment from the author is forthcoming from these contrasts, but the reader is left with the impression that Solomon's project is equivocal before God.

The equivocal nature of the project is supported by the Lord's response to it in 1 Kings 9:3-5. The Lord does hallow the place, but it is still Solomon's doing: "I have consecrated this temple which you have built" (v. 3). A clear stipulation is also attached: "if you walk before me" (v. 4; the sanctity of the place must be preserved, at the very least).

**Responses to the Temple.** What responses do we find in Scripture to the building of the temple beyond those found in the immediate context of it being built?

Rather than "going up" to the mountain of the house of the Lord to hear the word of the Lord, as in the eschatological visions of Isaiah and Micah (4:1-2), the Babylonians "descend" upon the temple to break down its wall and carry off the temple treasures. After centuries of covenant disloyalty, the Lord withdraws his presence from this place (Eze 10:18); in fact, he is driven from the temple because of the abominations of the people (Eze 8:6). This destruction could be seen as one of the contingencies of history except for the interpretations put upon it; the theologian of Lamentations states the destruction of the temple in unequivocal terms: "The Lord determined to tear down the wall of the Daughter of Zion" (2:8). The destruction is purposed by God because the people failed to live before him.

**Reconstructing the Temple.** High on the agenda of the postexilic community was the rebuilding of the temple. Indeed, it was not long before all their troubles which were many were attributed to the disrepair, the virtual absence, of the dwelling of God (Hag 1:3-9). The question must surely be asked: Why? Why, after a stern critique by the prophets, an outmaneuvering in the wisdom tradition, and its abandonment by God and destruction, would the people rebuild this structure?

The most obvious and strongest answer is that the Lord commands its construction (Ezra 1:2). But a further answer lies in the theological sophistication of the biblical authors themselves and in the power of this symbol to go beyond mere structure. The means for rebuilding temple theology are present in the preexilic theology itself, the selfsame theology that so thoroughly critiqued an overly literal-minded approach to the presence of God.
The temple was always symbolic, "textual" even before (and as much as) it was physical. To the extent that the metaphoric associations speak to the reality of our experience(s) before God, the symbol retains its power as a symbol. Although Jeremiah held little esteem for the ark/temple, he nevertheless prophesied that God’s throne would be Jerusalem itself (3:17), and Torah would be written in their hearts (31:31-34). These extensions of the symbol are developed further in the New Testament (Rev 21:22-27: "I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple Nothing impure will ever enter it."). The relativizing of the temple and moral earnestness that we see in Jeremiah were precisely the points of the Deuteronomic theology that influenced the short-lived reforms of Josiah.

The most extensive view of the new temple comes from Ezekiel. The construction of the temple is once again more ideal than real. In Ezekiel's new temple a remarkable event takes place: water flows from the temple (in Jerusalem) with such abundance that it calls to mind the rivers of paradise (see also Psalm 46:4; Rev 21:6).

The Songs of Zion in the Psalter are particularly rich in their celebration of the temple. With all their "sensuality" the reader is instructed to "behold" the beauty of the temple; walk about it; clap and shout; smell; bow down; and other sense-oriented activities. The Songs show that one is not to ponder the temple simply as a theological abstraction. The one who enters the temple not only receives spiritual blessings but material ones as well (Psalm 36:7-9).

While we do not find much by way of extensions of this symbol, its paradoxical and metaphoric nature are everywhere testified to in what takes place in the life of the communicant. The most powerful statement of this sort comes in Psalm 73, where the psalmist cries out because his inherited beliefs are at odds with his personal experiences. Everything is "oppressive" (v. 16). "Till I entered the sanctuary of God" and what unfolds is a transformation of his character and his understanding of God. What happens in the sanctuary? It is, as it should be, unspecified. We are simply told at the end of the psalm that "as for me, it is good to be near God I will tell of all your deeds."

In sum, by building the temple and by extending the metaphoric associations with temple, a continuity between the pre- and postexilic community was established (Ezra 1:7; Hag 2:9). For all the critique of the temple, in the final analysis, Yahweh takes pleasure in this place and it is a source of delight for those who assemble there (Psalm 43:3-4; 65:4; 84:1).

Jesus, Paul, and Judaism. In Judaism the temple was the religious, cultural, and national center; indeed, the temple was a microcosm of the universe. The power of the temple as a symbol is especially seen in its ability to continue long after the temple building itself was destroyed in a.d. 70.
According to the Gospels, Jesus participated fully in the practices and ethos of the temple. Jesus' birth was announced in the temple (Luke 1:17; 2:27-32), where he was also circumcised and studied with the rabbis as a lad (Luke 2:46). Later, of course, Jesus taught in the temple himself (John 7:14). It is not without significance that while Jesus is teaching in the temple precincts, he says, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me" (John 7:37), and the next day offers forgiveness to the woman taken in adultery (John 8:1-11). Blessing and forgiveness, priestly functions, are pronounced by Jesus in the shadow of the temple.

Jesus is not only a communicant and priest of sorts; he is also a prophet. Thus, when the temple practices are compromised, Jesus assails those who jeopardize the sanctity of the temple: "My house will be called a house of prayer But you have made it a den of robbers" (Mark 11:17). They were not living before God. Jesus, while teaching in its precincts, preserves the sanctity of the temple by his ethical admonitions. Even the forgiven woman is told to sin no more (John 8:11; see also John 4:23).

In the cleansing of the temple we also find a development and extension of the metaphoric associations of temple. Jesus employs a wordplay equivocating on the term "body" to break the parochial thinking of his audience (John 2:19). John characteristically points out the error of their literal-mindedness: "But the temple he had spoken of was his body" (John 2:21). Thus, in Jesus' acts and words we see the temple once again as a place of holiness, of danger (words of judgment; Jesus's own death) as well as blessing, and further extensions of the symbol are generated.

Paul also makes the correspondence between the temple and body: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?" (1 Cor 6:19; see also Rom 12:1-2). Of course, the believer can be called the temple of God only because Christ himself is the temple and the believer participates in Christ (1 Cor 3:9-17). The believer, like Paul himself, must be (cultically) pure in order to live in God's presence (2 Cor 2:17). If God can dwell in a holy place, by extension, he could dwell in a holy person!

After the destruction of the temple in a.d. 70, temple theology loses none of its living and healing power since the temple was always "beyond" its physical presence. A theology of temple answers the problem of how God's presence is mediated. Specifically, temple theology recognizes the importance of "sacred space." Its analogue is sacred time Sabbath, festivals, and appointed times of prayer. Humankind is oriented in time and space, thus Sabbath and temple testify to "eternity" beyond the confines of our usual orientation. Sabbath and temple redeem time and space.

Temple theology shows a high degree of theological sophistication holding ambivalent attitudes/doctrines in tension, part of the mystery of faith, of paradox. Temple theology is most fruitful when it is functioning as a powerful symbol, with the ability to be fully grounded in (sacred) space and yet generate new metaphoric associations a vision of God With Us
life in the presence of the Lord. Even though the temple is both protological and eschatological, it is always grounded in the realities of our lives: it is a mere edifice, yet, Behold! Thy God.

Anthony J. Petrotta

See also Altar; Israel; Offerings and Sacrifices; Priest, Priesthood; Tabernacle


Solomon’s Temple

1 Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the house. 2 The priests could not enter into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD’S house” (2 Chron. 7:1, 2).

“All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the LORD, saying, ‘Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting’” (2 Chron. 7:3).

“That the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim” (Ezek. 10:18).

The presence of God manifested in the Shekinah glory was present in Solomon’s Temple. Again, this Temple would be destroyed in 586BC by the Babylonians. After their 70 year captivity, the nation of Israel would return to the land in 536BC and begin rebuilding the Temple once again.

The Prophet Ezekiel sees the Shekinah glory depart from Solomon’s Temple because of their apostasy. Many would suggest that this removal of the Shekinah glory would not return until Jesus reenters the Temple.
"Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘This people says, ‘The time has not come, even the time for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.’” 3 Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 4 ‘Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?’” (Haggai 1:2-4).

"Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? Does it not seem to you like nothing in comparison? 4 But now take courage, Zerubbabel,’ declares the LORD, ‘take courage also, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all you people of the land take courage,’ declares the LORD, ‘and work; for I am with you,’ declares the LORD of hosts. 5 ‘As for the promise which I made you when you came out of Egypt, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear!’ 6 For thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. 7 I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the LORD of hosts. 8 ‘The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,’ declares the LORD of hosts. 9 ‘The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and in this place I will give peace,’ declares the LORD of hosts” (Haggai 2:3-9).

The statement made by the Prophet Haggai concerning the Temple and its glory is truly amazing. There is coming a day when the glory of the Lord will once more be in the Temple of His making and the “latter glory of this house will be greater than the former.” What they were looking forward to, we are looking back at in the person and work of Jesus Christ. The life and death of Jesus is a foretaste of Revelation 21:22-27. This Post-Exilic Temple would last for almost 400 years.

Comparison of the modestly rebuilt Post-Exilic Temple (at left) and the later, much grander Temple built by Herod the Great.
**Herod’s Temple**

In the eighteenth year (20/19 B.C.) of his reign, Herod rebuilt the Temple on a more magnificent scale.

**The Temple in Jerusalem is the permanent placement of the Tabernacle. Both the Tabernacle and the Temple are reminders of the Garden of Eden.**

**Both reminded people of God’s desire to dwell with them for their joy.**

First Kings 6:1ff, 1 Chronicles 22:1ff, 3:1ff, Ezra, Nehemiah and Haggai describe the rebuilding of the temple after the Babylonian captivity. This is the so-called “Second Temple” which Herod the Great later greatly enlarged. Jesus was dedicated in the Second Temple, He cast out money changers there on two occasions, and He frequently taught in the temple courts.

Since the terrible destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in AD 70, temple sacrifices, offerings, instruction, and worship have ceased in accordance with an Old Testament prophecy of Hosea (about 746 BC).

“For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or terephim. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days” (Hosea 3:4, 5).

King Herod’s Temple is the Temple of our Lord Jesus. The Greek word “Temple” [naos] comes from a primary word, naio meaning “to dwell” and can refer to a shrine or temple. Consider the occurrence of this word in Matthew’s Gospel.

“Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple [naos], that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple [naos] is obligated” (Matt. 23:16).

“You fools and blind men! Which is more important, the gold or the temple [naos] that sanctified the gold?” (Matt. 23:17).

“And whoever swears by the temple [naos], swears both by the temple and by Him who dwells within it” (Matt. 23:21).

“so that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple [naos] and the altar” (Matt. 23:35).

“And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple [naos] sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself” (Matt. 27:5).

“And behold, the veil of the temple [naos] was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split” (Matt. 27:51).

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Another word is used for “Temple” [hieron] to refer to a sacred place, i.e. the entire precincts (whereas naos denotes the central sanctuary itself) of the Temple (at Jerusalem or elsewhere). Again, let us note Matthew’s usage of this word.

“Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple [hieron]” (Matt. 4:5).

“Or have you not read in the Law, that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple [hieron] break the Sabbath and are innocent?” (Matt. 12:5).

“And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple [hieron], and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves” (Matt. 21:12).

“And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple [hieron], and He healed them” (Matt. 21:14).

“But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple [hieron], ‘Hosanna to the Son of David,’ they became indignant” (Matt. 21:15).

“When He entered the temple [hieron], the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching, and said, ‘By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?’” (Matt. 21:23).

“Jesus came out from the temple [hieron] and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple [hieron] buildings to Him” (Matt. 24:1).

“At that time Jesus said to the crowds, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as you would against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple [hieron] teaching and you did not seize Me” (Matt. 26:55).

The intent of this short read is to put the reader in the context of the Temple’s biblical lineage. It reaches back to the Garden of Eden and continues in Herod’s Temple. The person and work of Jesus Christ is linked to the Temple of His day. Although the Post-Exilic Temple as well as Herod’s Temple were probably devoid of the Shekinah glory, the people of God were left with promises of this glory returning to the Temple once more.
Temple in the Hebrew Bible and in the Archaeological Record of Syria-Palestine

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Introduction

In the ancient Mediterranean, temples were at the very center of society. The same was true for ancient Israel. Temples were the residence of the deity, a source of societal blessing, and often centers of writing, learning, and political power. In what follows, we explore the topic of temples in the Hebrew Bible and in ancient Syria-Palestine.

But before engaging the topic directly, a few words are in order. It is not a comprehensive article. And this is an important point to realize, because temples, of course, were found throughout the ancient Near East—in places like Mesopotamia and Egypt. These related geographical regions, however, will not be discussed here.

An outline of the study guide is provided for the reader's convenience:

1. Temples in the Hebrew Bible
   - a. Temple Defined
   - b. Precursors to the First Temple
   - c. The First Temple
   - d. The Temples of Jeroboam at Dan and Bethel
   - e. The First Temple and Josiah's Reforms
   - f. The Destruction of the First Temple
   - g. The Second Temple
   - h. Ezekiel's Visionary Temple (Ezekiel 40–48)
   - i. Temple Personnel
   - j. Psalms and the Temple

2. Temples in the Archaeological Record of Syria Palestine

3. Bibliography

Temple in the Hebrew Bible
http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/resource/temples.xhtml
Temple Defined

In the Hebrew Bible, a temple is often called a bayit ("house" see, e.g., 2 Sam 7:5–7, 13; 1 Kings 6–9, etc.) or a hêkāl ("palace" or "temple"; see, e.g., Jer 7:4; 24:1; Hag 2:15, 18, etc.). The former is found in numerous Semitic languages (Ugaritic: bt, Phoenician: bt, Akkadian: bītu, etc.), as is the latter (e.g., Ugaritic: hkl, Phoenician: hkl, Akkadian: ekallu). Unlike bayit, hêkāl has its roots in Sumerian (Sumerian: é-gal, "big house"), a non-Semitic language used in Mesopotamia.

Within the Hebrew Bible, hêkāl can be used to describe the temple complex as a whole (see, e.g., 2 Kgs 18:16; 23:4, etc.), or, in an even more limited way, the main room of the temple (see, e.g., 1 Kgs 6:5, 17, etc.). These terms are helpful starting places, for both rightly imply that a temple was a residence for a deity—a divine address, as it were.

The first part of this article discusses five temples from the Hebrew Bible: the First Temple (Solomon's Temple), the two rival northern temples established by Jeroboam, the Second Temple dedicated in 516 BCE, and the temple described in Ezekiel's vision (Ezekiel 40–48).

Precursors to Solomon's Temple

But, according to the Hebrew Bible, other cultic sites and complexes preceded these five temples. For instance, the mobile Tabernacle (see, e.g., Exodus 25–31, 35–40) was the center of worship from the time of Moses to the time of David. The inner-most part of the Tabernacle housed the famed Ark—often called the Ark of the Covenant—which David eventually relocated to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6), and which Solomon, in time, placed in the Temple (1 Kgs 6:19). The First Temple was, in many ways, a grander, more permanent version of the Tabernacle.

Whereas the Tabernacle and the Ark were mobile, there were numerous other physical religious sites where rituals took place. These sites include, but are not limited to, Shiloh, where the priesthood of Eli was centered, Shechem, and Dan.

The First Temple

According to the Hebrew Bible, the construction of the First Temple was undertaken by Solomon. This process is described in 1 Kings 6–7 and 2 Chronicles 2–5. While the historicity of these accounts is debatable, they do present the events in a manner that is consistent with other ancient Near Eastern temple-building narratives (see Hurowitz 1992). For instance, Solomon utilizes luxury materials from Lebanon (1 Kgs 5:20–28), a famous region of the Near East whose cedar was highly prized for royal and cultic building projects (see, e.g., Baal's temple-building narrative in KTU 1.4 VI 18–21). For other examples, see Hurowitz 1992. The architectural features of this temple—including its dimensions, layout, cultic implements, etc.—are also provided, sometimes in excruciating detail. For a discussion of the temple's architectural features, see the helpful article by John Lundquist in The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East. And for a discussion of the symbolism of the temple, see Bloch-Smith 1994.

But as noted above, there are two accounts of the building of Solomon's temple, one in 1 Kings and one in 2 Chronicles. How are they different? And why does the Hebrew Bible have two? The "Chronicler" (an academic term for the author(s) responsible for 1–2 Chronicles) has a very
distinct view of both the temple and its building process. According to Steven Mckenzie in How to Read the Bible, four interests shape the Chronicler's history:

1. The idealization of the reigns of David and Solomon as the "golden age" of Israel and the presentation of the two men, especially Solomon, as model kings.

2. The central importance of the temple, its worship, and its personnel to the faith and life of Israel.

3. The unity of "all Israel" as Yahweh's chosen people.

4. The idea of immediate reward for righteousness or retribution for evildoing.

The following two charts provide a set of contrasts and comparisons between the Kings and the Chronicles.

A CHART OF CONTRASTS

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These interests deeply affected his retelling of the temple-building narrative. For example, he creates a number of speeches not found in either Samuel or Kings (1 Chronicles 22, 28, 29), in which David claims that Solomon was chosen to build the temple. David, moreover, seems to play a more active role in preparing for the construction of the temple than he does in 1 Kings. These speeches do not necessarily contradict the picture given in 1 Kings, then, but they do underscore Solomon's election by Yhwh and David's involvement in the actual construction of the temple. The Chronicler's emphasis on David, Solomon, and the First Temple probably tells us more about the Chronicler and his own time (the "Persian Period") than it does about the actual building of the First Temple, for which we have little to no archaeological evidence (see below).

The Temples of Jeroboam at Dan and Bethel

In order to consolidate his new break-away kingdom, Jeroboam set up golden calves at Dan and Bethel. Jacob had had a dream at Bethel, where he erected a stone and made a vow to Yhwh (Gen 28:10–22). And 1 Samuel 10:3 and Amos 5:5 indicate that, at some points in Israel's history, ritual activity occurred there. Little is known from the Hebrew Bible about the religious origins of the site of Dan. Judges 18:28–30 suggests that it was named after Dan, the ancestor of the Danites, and that it had some religious significance for the tribe. But other than these traditional fragments, which may not correspond to historical reality, we don't know much about the prehistory of these sites, and given the polemical nature of the narrative in 1 Kings it is hard to know how much we can actually know about Jeroboam's temples. Taking the account at face value, Jeroboam established the golden calves as objects of veneration, created a new non-Levitical priesthood and established a rival pilgrimage feast of Tabernacles on the fifteenth day of the eighth month (see 1 Kgs 12:28–33).

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The First Temple and Josiah's Reforms

According to both Chronicles and Kings, the First Temple also plays a prominent role during the reign of Josiah. In 622 BCE, Josiah enacted a number of reforms that, among other things, limited sacrificial worship to Jerusalem and attempted to remove foreign elements from the cult (see "Deuteronomy: Introduction; The Historical Context and Literary Background" [The Jewish Study Bible], along with 2 Kings 22–23; 2 Chronicles 34–35). This "Josianic reform" seems to take its cue from the laws of an earlier version of Deuteronomy. The reform, moreover, understands the unnamed "place which Yhwh your God will choose" (see, e.g., Deut 12:5) to be Jerusalem itself.

The Destruction of the First Temple

While the temple was stripped of valuables on several occasions (see, e.g., 1 Kgs 14:25–26; 15:16–21, etc.), the most devastating and decisive incident occurred in 587 BCE, when it was looted and destroyed by the Babyloniens; see 2 Kgs 25:9–17; cf. Jer 52:12–23). According to the Hebrew Bible, Nebuzaradan—a servant of Nebuchadnezzar—burned the bêt Yhwh (the "House/Temple of Yhwh"), the bêt hammelek (the "House/Palace of the King") and all the batê yěrûšālaim ("houses of Jerusalem"): governmental, religious, and domestic life was annihilated in this devastating act of aggression. This event, then, not only marks the end of the First Temple, it also marks the end of the Judahite monarchy's reign from Jerusalem.

The Second Temple

When scholars speak of the "Second Temple," they are referring to the building project that was begun just after Cyrus II decreed that the Jews could return to Yehud and rebuild the Temple (see Ezra 1; 2 Chronicles 36) in 538 BCE. After a delay of some time, the temple was eventually completed ca. 516–515 BCE. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah played a significant role by encouraging the building process. But this Second Temple met with mixed reviews: some of the older generation who had seen the former temple, wept at the laying of the new foundation, while others shouted for joy (Ezra 3:12).

Around 20 BCE, Herod the Great, began a massive renovation of the Second Temple. The project wasn't completed, however, until around 64 CE by Agrippa II. These renovations did not interrupt the regular offerings or sacrifices. During Rome's suppression of the first Jewish Revolt, however, the newly renovated Second Temple became the object of imperial ire: only six years after its completion, in the summer of 70 CE, the soldiers of Titus burned the temple. Several years later, Rome assaulted the stronghold at Masada, where numerous Jewish rebels met their ends. The burning of the renovated Second Temple marks the end of the "Second Temple Period" and the beginning of the "classical rabbinic era."

Ezekiel's Visionary Temple

In Ezekiel 40–48 (see "Priesthood, Temples, and Sacrifice: Ezekiel" [The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies]), the prophet Ezekiel relates a dramatic vision in which he sees a temple that is inspired by the First Temple, in which he served as a priest. There are, however, many features in Ezekiel's vision that are not found in either the original temple or pentateuchal legislation. For
**God With Us**

One, a large stream flows out from the threshold of the Temple (Ezekiel 47). This stream, which Ezekiel himself enters, has life-giving properties. Moreover, the priesthood is given exclusively to the sons of Zadok (see Ezek 44:15). The Levites who "forsook Me" are not permitted to serve as priests (see Ezek 44:10–14). Other idiosyncrasies in the prophet's vision of worship in the restored Temple are even at odds with pentateuchal law, such as his regulations for the Passover. Ezekiel's Temple is clearly an ideal, one that was never concretized in reality, and these visionary and idealistic dynamics should be kept in mind when interpreting the vision.

**Temple Personnel**

Up to this point, I have refrained from directly addressing an important question: Who exactly gets to be a priest? The answer one receives depends on where one is reading in the Hebrew Bible. Different answers are given by P and the Chronicler, the book of Ezekiel, D (the deuteronomist), and J/E (the Jahwist and the Elohist). While some of these sources (e.g., J, E, D, and P) are now contested by scholars, I will continue to use them since scholarly literature related to the priesthood is normally framed in these terms. For textual citations substantiating the claims made below, see the linked articles and Menahem Haran's helpful work on temples and the priesthood (1985), which I draw on extensively here.

For P and Chronicles, only Aaron and his sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, are permitted to serve as priests. Aaron's family is part of the larger tribe of Levi. Levites who are not descended from Aaron's sons, however, are given a subordinate status—hence the distinction between the "priests and the Levites" (see, e.g., 1 Chr 15:14). This has more to do with their religious roles than with their tribal associations, since both sons of Aaron and Levites are, technically speaking, part of the tribe of Levi. The Levites guarded the temple and assisted by helping with tasks that were not immediately related to the altar. Ezekiel's understanding of the priesthood is similar to P's, except that, for him, the priesthood is limited to the sons of Zadok, who—not unproblematically—are in the lineage of Aaron (see 1 Chr 6:1–8, 49–53).

D, J, and E, however, have a very different view of the priesthood. According to these sources, there are no hierarchical divisions in the family of Levi, except those based on gender. All male members of the clan may be priests, as long as they are at a temple.

Jeroboam did not afford special status to Aaron's sons—or to any of the Levites for that matter. In fact, 1 Kings 13 polemically describes him as appointing anyone he wished (1 Kgs 13:33). Second Chronicles intensifies this description of Jeroboam by claiming that he explicitly excluded Levites from serving Yhwh (2 Chr 11:13–17).

**Psalms and the Temple**

Many if not most of the extant psalms probably played a role in ancient Israel and early Judaism's worship at the temple. Some texts suggest as much. Hannah, for instance offers a prayer to Yhwh after bringing Samuel to the byt Yhwh at Shiloh (see 1 Sam 2:1–10). In Chronicles, David commissions Levitical singers to praise Yhwh at the temple. Among their number was Asaph (1 Chr 16:4–5; cf. 1 Chronicles 25) to whom a collection of Psalms are attributed (Psalms 50, 73–83). And since the time of Hermann Gunkel (1862–1932), form critics have explored how the form and content of psalms might provide clues as to the psalms' social context.
settings (Sitze im Leben). The Songs of Ascents (see Psalms 120–134), for example, may have been by pilgrim songs, though this is a debated point. In short, form critics utilize a set of tools that help them hypothesize about how certain psalms or groups of psalms were used in particular religious settings.

Moving away from the social world of ancient Israel and into the literary world of the psalms themselves, the temple is frequently a topic of reflection. In Psalm 84, the poet yearns for the courts of Yhwh, and points out the happiness of those who inhabit Yhwh's house (Ps 84:3–5; cf. Pss 26:8; 27:4; 65:5). Psalm 15 asks, "Lord, who may sojourn in Your tent, who may dwell on Your holy mountain?" (v. 1, TNK). The temple is also a locus of fertility, abundance, and life (see, e.g., Pss 52:10; 92:13–15). Needless to say, a great deal more could be said about the temple in the Psalter, but from the following discussion it is abundantly clear that the temple and the Psalms are inextricably tied to one another.

Temples in the Psalter

The substantial amount of evidence for temples in the Hebrew Bible might lead one to believe that an equally substantial amount of evidence is also available in archaeological sources. This assumption would be both correct and incorrect. On the one hand, temples, shrines, and other sacred places can be found throughout Syria-Palestine. On the other hand, there is very little evidence related directly to either the First Temple or to the Zerubbabel stage of the Second Temple. The two temples, in other words, are exclusively textual temples—attested to in the pages of the Hebrew Bible, but missing (as of yet) in the dirt of Syria-Palestine.

In spite of this unfortunate dearth of evidence for the First and Second Temples, archaeological finds related to other sacred places in and around Syria-Palestine are abundant. This evidence can, at times, provide indirect information about temples and religious sites and practices mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. In what follows, then, I will list a number of sites and finds related to temples or other sacred architecture. The list of sites is drawn, in part, from a helpful article on temples by Beth Alpert Nakhai in The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East. Sites that may be relevant but which lack corresponding articles on the Oxford Biblical Studies Online Website, however, are not included. Each site is organized alphabetically and includes a link to an entry where additional information can be found.

Bibliography

**Jesus and Temple Furniture**

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<th>Furniture</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Eastern Gate</td>
<td>I am the Door [John 10:9; 14:6]</td>
<td>Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Brazen Altar</td>
<td>Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world [John 1:29, 36]</td>
<td>Sacrifice</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Laver</td>
<td>I am the Living Water [John 4:10; 7:38]</td>
<td>Cleansing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lampstand</td>
<td>I am the Light of the World [John 8:12]</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Table of Bread</td>
<td>I am the Bread of Life [John 6:35]</td>
<td>Sustenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Altar of Incense</td>
<td>Jesus intercedes in behalf of His people [John 17; Rev. 12:9]</td>
<td>Mercy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Veil</td>
<td>The Veil was rent [Matt. 27:51]; His body was broken [1 Cor. 11:24]</td>
<td>Separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ark of the Covenant</td>
<td>Atonement is made; God is with us [John 1:14]</td>
<td>Presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Scripture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burnt Offering</td>
<td>The burnt sacrifice is the most important of all the sacrifices offered to God, because it expressed “dedication.” The Burnt offering was performed to atone for the peoples sins against the Lord and was a dedication offering of ones life before the Lord continually.</td>
<td>Ephesians 5:2, “And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grain Offering</td>
<td>Leviticus chapter 2 mentions 4 kinds of cereal offerings and gives cooking instructions for each. The purpose of the meal offering was an offering of gifts and speaks of a life that is dedicated to generosity and giving.</td>
<td>Ephesians 5:2, “And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace Offering</td>
<td>This sacrifice had as its essential feature the concept of “fellowship.” This sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving was most of the time a voluntary act.</td>
<td>Ephesians 5:2, “And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin Offering</td>
<td>The sin offering expiated (paid the debt in full) the worshippers unintentional weaknesses and failures before the Lord.</td>
<td>The sin offering was not a voluntary sacrifice, as were the three sweet savor oblations above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trespass Offering</td>
<td>The trespass offering was very similar to that of the sin offering but the main difference was that the trespass offering was an offering of money for sins of ignorance connected with fraud. The trespass offering may be rendered “guilt offering,” and it symbolized satisfaction or restitution.</td>
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Feast Days

THE SPRING FEASTS
1. Passover (Pesach) - Nisan 14-15
2. Unleavened Bread (Chag Hamotzi) - Nisan 15-22
3. First Fruits (Yom habikkurim) - Nisan 16-17
4. Pentecost (Shavu'ot) - Sivan 6-7

THE FALL FEASTS
1. Trumpets (Yom Teru'ah) - Tishri 1
2. Atonement (Yom Kippur) - Tishri 10
3. Tabernacles (Sukkot) - Tishri 15-22
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feast</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Biblical Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passover</td>
<td>Passover is the Feast of Salvation.</td>
<td>For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed [1 Cor. 5:7]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unleavened Bread</td>
<td>No Corruption</td>
<td>Acts 2:27 BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Fruits</td>
<td>The feast for acknowledging the fertility of the land He gave the Israelites.</td>
<td>1 Cor. 15:20 ¶ But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>Leviticus 23:16 says, &quot;Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shell ye number fifty days, and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord.&quot;</td>
<td>A review of the first four [spring] feasts reveals that Yeshua was crucified on Pesach, buried on Unleavened Bread, raised on First Fruits and sent the Ruach Hakkodesh on Shavu‘ot. Because we have not yet seen the fulfillment of feast number five - Trumpets - we remain under the orders of Shavu‘ot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpets</td>
<td>The trumpet was the signal for the field workers to come into the Temple. The high priest actually blew the trumpet so that the faithful would stop harvesting to worship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day of Atonement</td>
<td>Yom Kippur, or the &quot;Day of Atonement,&quot; is the holiest day of the Jewish year</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tabernacles</td>
<td>God wanted to celebrate the fact that He provided shelter for the Israelites in the wilderness.</td>
<td>The Lord will establish His Tabernacle in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 37:26), and the world will come every year to appear before the King and worship Him (Zechariah 14:16-17).</td>
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</tbody>
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