

Mike Ensley - The Temple Mount

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Okay, now, this slide, I've got four different headings on it. We're going to use that slide four times because this is the Temple Mount. Before it was the Temple Mount, this is when it was the Mount Moriah, and this is the first place where it's mentioned in the scriptures is Genesis 14:18 where it says, "and Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought out bread and wine, and he was the priest of God Most High."

He blessed him and said, blessed be Abram of God Most High, preserver of heaven and earth, and blessed, and blessed be God Most High that has delivered him from his enemies. You will remember this is when Abraham had come back from rescuing his nephew Lot from those who had captured him, and Abram went out to gather him, to win him back from these people, and on the way back, Melchizedek came out and greeted him. This is the first mention, that I know of anyway, of Mount Moriah or the Temple Mount.

That is one other thing I was going to say. One of the reasons I wanted to do that here is I realize there's people here that know a lot more about this than I do. So if you see something that needs to be corrected, please tell me afterwards. Because I think this is very important because God had arranged all of this so we could enjoy it and see it.

Now, this word "peace" is from Strong's 8004. It's the word that's translated to Salem, and it means peace. I put that up there because this is a recurring theme in this study, and peace is going to refer or going to be related to many times, and of course, Melchizedek, he's a king of Salem, priest of the Most High God.

It means king of righteousness and King of Salem, King of peace. He is such an apt figure for our Lord Jesus, because unlike the Aaronic priesthood, he will be a king priest. The Aaronic priesthood weren't kings, but Melchizedek was. That's one of the reasons why he's very important. Okay, now, the second bullet point on this slide has to do with when Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice.

God talked to Abraham and he said, take your son, your only son. Yes, Isaac, whom you love so much. This is a new living translation, by the way, and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you.

This wasn't just some random thing. It wasn't like Abraham just wandered out there and said, oh, that hill. Look. No, this God specified this is where it should happen. Okay.

Chosen of the. That's what Moriah means, is chosen of Jehovah. Jehovah chose this place, and there was a reason for that.

We're kind of running a little low on time. So I think you'll remember this is when it actually happened that Abraham was to offer Isaac the last two verses, and then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in the thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son, and Abraham called the place Yahweh-Yereh, which means the Lord will provide.

Why did it do that? Okay, and I scored that because when was the last time you heard the Temple Mount referred to as the Mountain of the Lord Will Provide? Evidently, when this was written, they referred to it that way. But I thought that was kind of interesting.

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And we'll see later on. Hopefully, if I have enough time, we'll get to that. Okay, now the third bullet point on this slide has to do with something a little more obscure. We're going to go through this one pretty fast. Remember how David ordered a census of the people?

And that in and of itself doesn't really seem like that big a deal, but it was a grave sin because it indicated that he didn't have proper confidence in God to raise a large enough army to protect them from their enemies, and so God punished David for that, and here we have. God is speaking to the prophet. He says, go and say to David.

This is what the Lord says. I will give you three choices. Choose one of these punishments and I will inflict it on you.

Gad came to David and asked him, will you choose three years of famine throughout your land, three months of fleeing from your enemies, or three days of severe plague throughout the land? Think it over and decide what answer I should give the Lord. David said that I'm in a desperate situation. Let us not fall into the hand of man, but let us fall into the hand of God because he is merciful, and so the Lord sent a plague upon Israel that morning, and it lasted for three days.

And a total of 70,000 people died throughout the nation, from Dan even to northeast Beersheba in the south. Wow, that was pretty severe. Initially, you might think maybe he didn't make the best choice, but he actually did. If we go to the 16th verse, it says, but as the angel was approaching to destroy Jerusalem, the Lord relented and said to the death angel, stop, that is enough, and at that moment, the angel of the Lord was by the threshing floor of Urana, the Jebusite.

Okay, well, you might be asking, well, what does that have to do with our subject? Well, if you go to the last bullet point.

Actually, I should have mentioned that next verse there. David built an altar there, and he offered a burnt offering, a peace offering to God in answering his prayer to stop the plague there. Okay, so when you go to the last bullet point, that is why this is important. This is Second Chronicles, the third chapter, verse one. It says, so Solomon began to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem on the mount of Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to David, his father.

The temple was built on the threshing floor of Arana, the Jebusite. That's why it's important. Anyway, I thought that was kind of interesting. So included that in there. David has had it explained to his son that the Lord didn't want him to build the temple.

I think we'll go ahead and read this. This is First Chronicles, the 22nd chapter, verse 7, where David said to Solomon, my son, I had intended to build the house for the name of the Lord, but the word of the Lord came to me saying, you have shed much blood and have waged great wars. You shall not build a house to my name because you have shed much blood on the earth before me. Behold, a son will be born to you who shall be a man of rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on all sides, and his name shall be Solomon.

And I will give him peace and quiet in Israel in his days. He shall build a house to my name, and he shall be my son, and I will be his father, and I will establish his throne and his kingdom in Israel forever. Here again, Solomon, if you go to. The original word means peace, and it is interesting, this is so important that God would not let David build the temple, even though David was said to be a man after God's own heart.

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But he was a man of war, and so God didn't want him to build the temple.

And so Solomon builds the temple. This verse essentially just gives us a little bit of timing for that. This is kind of an artist's conception of what the old city might have looked like with Solomon's temple up on the top of the hill and the old walled city, the protected city down below.

The construction of Solomon's temple is described in 1 Kings, chapters 5-9.

We're not going to spend a lot of time on that detail because that would take a lot more than our hour. But I'll put this verse in here. We hear this verse a lot, but this is where it comes from. This is 1 Kings 6:7. It says the house, while it was being built, was built of stone prepared at the.

And there was neither hammer nor axe nor any iron tool heard in the house while it was being built, and of course, we think that this is a picture of us because we are stones in the symbolic temple.

We are being prepared here. So when the kingdom arrangement comes, we will be fit together and there won't be the commotion that is involved in the shaping of us and to the stones that God wants us to be in that spiritual kingdom.

But the very climax of the building process was the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant into the temple, out of the tabernacle, into the temple. Here again, we're going to kind of cut to the last two verses, and King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel who had gathered together to him were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen, they could not be numbered or counted, and then the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord to its place in the inner sanctuary of the house, to the most holy place under the wings of the cherubim. It's interesting.

It specifically says to its place they had prepared a place in the Most Holy to set the Ark of the Covenant, and so that's where it was brought. It was brought in the most Holy and placed in its place very carefully. Solomon's Temple was magnificent. It was huge and it stood for almost 400 years. Essentially, Solomon's Temple was there from the time it was built in Solomon's site until the destruction by Babylon. It was there through the whole history of the nation of Israel, essentially.

And of course, Israel was not always faithful to God. They fell away in many different occasions. But this was an interesting situation. This happened very shortly before Israel was taken away to Babylon. This is King Josiah.

He was a good king, and he wanted to bring Israel back to a position of holiness before God, and so he had a passover which had been neglected for years and years. He also cleaned out the temple, and this verse is interesting, and he also said to the Levites, who taught all Israel and who were holy to the Lord, put the Ark, the holy Ark, in the house which Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel, built.

And it will be a burden on your shoulders no longer now serve the Lord your God and his people. Evidently, the Ark had been removed, and we're not really told a whole lot about that. But Josiah Brought it into the most Holy.

And then shortly thereafter, the whole temple arrangement was destroyed by the Babylonians.

These verses describe that destruction. The reason why that's up there is it describes all the things that was taken out of the Ark, or, I'm sorry, out of the temple, and I'm not going to read it, but you can see it up there, all the different instruments and the gold and everything that was used in the

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temple for religious service. You notice anything missing? The Ark is not there.

Wouldn't you think if they carried the Ark out of the temple, they would have mentioned that?

Anyway, that's kind of interesting, and we don't really know why. Maybe it was there and they took it out. We just don't know it. But I suspect it was not there anymore. But we'll talk about that a little bit later.

Okay, so this is a slide that shows the people being driven out of Jerusalem like cattle. They were driven out and driven to Babylon. Can you imagine being in that group, turning around, looking over your shoulder, seeing the city and the temple that you loved being burnt like that? It would be so hard. But there were a few that were still very loyal to God.

And they never lost their hope that one day they would be allowed to return and rebuild the temple, and we have an example of that in Daniel, as it's described in Daniel the sixth chapter, verse 10. I don't think we'll read it. But Daniel continued to pray to God three times a day. Even though the king of Babylon had made a rule against that.

He did it anyway. But time went on and eventually Cyrus became king.

Let's read the last two verses of this. Cyrus became king, and thus says Cyrus, king of Persia, the Lord, the God of Heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has appointed me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. I thought that was an interesting verse.

Whoever then is among you of the people, may his God be with him. Let him go to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel. He is the God who is in Jerusalem. Cyrus was pretty amazing. I mean, this is a Gentile king, but he evidently had a faith in God and he wanted that temple rebuilt.

So they go back and they're building the temple, and I'm kind of getting in a pattern here, but we're kind of saving a little time by just going to the last. You can kind of see where this is. This is where Ezra was building the temple. They lay the foundation.

I'll paraphrase they lay the foundation for the temple, for the second temple. Now, this isn't Solomon's temple. This is the first second temple, and it says in verse 12. Yet many of the priests and the Levites and the heads of the fathers households, the old men who had seen the first temple, they must have been pretty old.

They had been there for 70 years. Anyway. Yeah, these old guys that remembered the first temple, they wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this house which was laid before their eyes, while many were shouting for joy because the temple is being rebuilt. But the old guys were looking at it and saying in verse 13, so the people could not distinguish the shouts of joy because. Let's see that version verse.

I thought the old guys. I guess it's the next slide. Okay, this last part of this slide.

Okay, it jumped. Let's see. What did you tell me to use?

Well, it's not working. Oh, okay, okay. Okay. So the 13th verse. So that the people could not distinguish the sound of the shouts for joy, for the sound of weeping of the people.

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For the people shouted with a loud voice and the sound was heard afar off. It must have been kind of a confusing scene. Some were shouting for joy and some were crying. But the ones that were crying were crying because the temple they could see was not going to be anything like what they were used to.

But God said in the seventh verse here in this layout, that I will shake the nations and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts. The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former, says the Lord, and in this place I will give peace, declares the Lord of hosts. You know, Brother Russell said that this was actually.

This is reprint 2520. Brother Russell describes it that the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy will be in the kingdom arrangement. The glorious spiritual temple with Christ as the chief cornerstone and the church as the understones, is the glorious temple that's referred to in this prophecy, and I believe that's true. But could there have been at least a smaller literal fulfillment of that prophecy?

This is what is known as Herod's Temple. This is the temple that existed in Jesus time and then the early Church history. While the apostles were still Jerusalem, it was built by this guy. This is King Herod the Great, and he was known for large building projects. The temple in Jerusalem might have been one of the largest ones.

Well, why did he do that? Did he do that? Because he loved the Jews or he loved God, or he's just a great guy. No, no, no. This is the same guy who was king when Jesus was born.

And he's the one that ordered the baby boys slaughtered in Bethlehem because he was afraid that one of them would someday supplant him as king. He was not a good guy. But you know, it's interesting because God can use evil people like this to accomplish his goals. I think that God wanted this temple, this glorious, this big temple, as kind of a backdrop of Jesus first advent. It wasn't there very long.

It was destroyed in AD 70. It didn't last 400 years like Solomon's temple did. Anyway, it is just interesting that it was there and it was there when it was. But Herod expanded the temple complex from 17 to 35 acres. It was huge.

Now, I do not know how many of you really know how big 35 acres is. This is a picture of the old city. Again, you can see that the Temple Mount was actually a pretty big part of it. So how big is 35 acres? You know, I'm a farmer.

I deal with different size pieces of ground all the time. So I got a pretty good idea what 35 acres looks like. But I realize that most of you aren't, and so I made a couple slides here that might help you understand how big we're talking about here. This Wrigley Field here in Chicago, It's a pretty big place.

I understand they play baseball there, but anyway, yeah, it holds what, a little under 42,000 people? That's only nine acres. That's not even a third the size of the Temple Mount. Okay, let's look at something a little bit bigger here. This is Soldier Field in Chicago.

This is a little bigger. It holds almost 67,000 people. That's 21 acres. But you see, the Temple Mount was bigger than either one of these places.

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This is artist's rendition of what the Temple Mount might have looked like during the festival times. When they were having the Passover. Everybody was coming and it was just full of people. You see, the people just look like little ants running around out there. There's just so many of them.

And if you think of it that way and you think about how big this place was and how many people would have taken to fill those massive squares and everything. It adds new flavor and color to scriptures like this. This is Matthew 26:3, and it says then the chief priests and elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest called Caiaphas, and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said, not during the festival, otherwise a riot might occur of the people.

I mean, you look at how many people we are talking about here and you understand that if there was a riot of the people, they would not have had any way to handle a riot of that many people. So they were very careful. That is why they had to condemn our Lord at night when there was not all these people there. The trial of our Lord was very illegal because the timing was all wrong and everything. They had to do that because otherwise the people would have tore it apart.

This is a Google Earth picture of what the Temple Mount looks like now. I don't know. This doesn't work, does it? I'd like to have a cursor or something under there. But you can probably see if I describe it, there's an outline there, very distinct that you can see.

If I had my mouse, I would point around it. Google Earth has different measuring tools. You can measure distance and you can measure area, and if you do that here, guess what that area comes out to? 35 acres.

So I think we've got a pretty good picture of where the Temple Mount was.

Jesus foretold that the temple would be destroyed. This is Luke, the 21st chapter, beginning of verse 5. New Living Translation Some of the disciples were talking about the majestic stonework of the temple and the memorial decorations of the walls. But Jesus said, a time is coming when all these things will be completely demolished. Not one stone will be left on another.

Jesus loved the temple. He considered that his Father's house, but he knew it would be destroyed.

But what about the Ark? He mentioned the Ark of the Covenant a little bit earlier.

And when they brought all the. When they took everything out of the temple, they didn't mention the Ark. When they brought everything back into the temple. That's what these verses are. I'm not going to read them, but if you look through that, no Ark, they don't mention it.

So the question becomes, was the Ark of the Covenant ever in the second Temple? I can't find any record of it. If any of you can, I'd love to see it. Was it ever in Herod's temple during Jesus first advent? I don't think it was.

Well, if the Ark is no longer in the most holy, what is? How many pieces of furniture were in the most holy one? The Ark of the Covenant with the mercy seat on top? Well, if it's not there anymore, what's in there? Well, you say, well, nothing.

And that may be true. We don't really know for sure what was in there, but what happened. I'm not really sure how much the Atonement Day sacrifices were observed during this time, but if they were, you remember how the priest would go into the Most Holy once a year and sprinkle the

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blood. What do you do if there isn't an ark there, if there is not a mercy seat there?

I guess one way we can kind of think of it a little bit is what is there now? Now, this is the part I'm not sure about. I don't know if any of the next few slides I'm going to show you really mean anything or not, but this is what is there. Now, this is the Islamic shrine called the Dome of the Rock. It was constructed in the late 1600s.

And what is in the Dome of the Rock? I was going to ask this question before I flip that slide, but what is in the Dome of the Rock? Surprise, surprise, is a rock. Okay? That's what it is.

But this rock is very interesting, okay?

It has some interesting names. This rock is called the foundation stone. It's called the noble stone. The thing that's really interesting about it, it's called the pierced stone. If I had my pointer.

But you see on the lower left hand, just left of center, there's kind of a round little circle there. That's why this is called the pierced stone, because that goes down to a lower chamber called the well of Souls. But when they built this thing, they were trying to make it so the dome was right over the top of where the most holy temple was, and when Herod's temple was built, they were trying very hard to make the most holy right where the most holy was in Solomon's Temple. So if all of that is true, that is what would be in the most holy?

After that, the Ark of the Covenant isn't there anymore. But I get kind of excited about that. But on the other hand, I don't really know if that's true or not. You can find commentators that have degrees, as long as you're armed to say, no, that's not right. They would come up with all kinds of reasons why that can't be.

But I think it's interesting. Another thing about this, I had my pointer. You see this little kind of square edge on the rock looks like it's been carved out right there.

The dimensions on that correspond exactly to the measurements of the Ark of the Covenant.

The idea is the rock had this little area carved out. When it says that the Ark was brought into its place.

The argument is that's what they were talking about. They had prepared a special place right there for the Ark of the Covenant, and I don't know, you can really see it. Maybe it's not right, and it's all not right. But it's something that if you want to do a little research and study, it's kind of an interesting.

It doesn't mean that much. It's not like it's just really important to our faith that we get this right. But on the other hand, isn't it kind of interesting? It's just kind of interesting.

This is called the well of Souls, which is an interesting name. It's right under this rock that we were looking at before. There's a little stairway that goes down to it. Jewish legend says that the priests hid the Ark of the Covenant down here from the Babylonians, and whether they did or they didn't, we don't really know.

And it doesn't really matter because we don't have it now. But anyway, it's an interesting little another thing about this formation geologically. This is what we call an outcropping. What an outcropping is, is a geological formation that is above much younger geological formations below it.

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In other words, this rock is much older geologically than everything around it.

And that's another interesting Jewish tradition, is that this was where God started the creation of the earth. You know, that's just something that's built into their legends and whatnot. But it is a very old foundation. Whether it's that old or not, don't really know. This shows the cutaway of what the Temple Mount looks like.

This one's actually a lot more interesting if this is correct. Okay. This is the. The same thing with the second Temple. The temple during Jesus time.

Really?

I can't read these on this computer, but it shows the veil, the curtain, that veil was somewhere between 4 and 6 inches thick. You know the Levi commercial where they show the horses pulling the pants apart?

This was that strong about six times, and when Jesus died on the cross, it was rent top to bottom. So that I think we all agree that symbolizes the way was opened. The way was open for the church to approach God, and the rock back there is.

Back there.

Can I read that? There's a caption there I really like. It says the high priest. Priest.

Anyway, I'll just paraphrase says that the high priest would enter the most holy twice a year and go beyond that curtain and do the service of The Day of Atonement, and if they did, they would be sprinkling the blood on that rock. Now, I don't know if that's really true, but if it is, it's fascinating because that rock is kind of a neat symbol of Jesus. I mean, we've got a lot of different things in the Old Testament saying he's the rock and this and that, and if the blood is, the ark isn't.

You know, the ark isn't there anymore. Why wasn't the ark there anymore? I think it was because they didn't need the ark there anymore. They had Jesus. It's kind of like when Jesus told him that the Queen of the south will rise up to this generation and judge it because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

And yet there's something greater than Solomon here. I think God thought that they didn't need the ark there anymore because they had Jesus. They didn't need the ark there anymore.

This is what's called the Wailing Wall. It's the west wall. It's one of the few structures there that remains intact for. From the old days, and I put the slide in there because it kind of shows the relation between the west wall and where the Dome of the Rock is.

And here's this slide again, the same thing. You see where all that is and how it all kind of fits together.

I'd like to spend just a couple minutes. How are we doing? Yeah, we're doing all right. I've got until 15 after, right? Yeah.

Okay. We'd like to just talk a little bit about how important this temple was in Jesus day. This was the backstage for Jesus ministry in a lot of different instances that we have recorded in this. I mean, not all. I mean, he was in different places, but the temple was important, and it began very early.

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When he was first born, they brought him into the temple.

See, let's just. I'll do what I've been doing. I'll read. Start at verse 27, and he came in the spirit into the temple.

And when the parents brought in the child to carry out for him the custom of the law, then he took him into his arms and blessed God and said, now, Lord, you may release your bond, servant, to depart in peace according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation. So this is Simon who was in the temple, and he had been told that he wouldn't see death until he saw God's salvation. So that was just one of the first things that happened in Jesus's ministry and his first advent, and of course we have a similar thing with Hannah.

Hannah, a prophet, was also there in the temple. She was a daughter of Pharaoh from the tribe of Asher, and she was very old. Her husband died when they had been married only seven years, and then she lived as a widow to the age of 84.

She never left the temple, but stayed there day and night worshiping God, fasting in prayer, and she came along just as Simon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God and she talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Israel.

Then we have the instance when Jesus was 12 years old, he went to the temple. Remember, his parents had gone to Jerusalem for the Passover season. This kind of gives you a little idea. Jesus was not a normal 12 year old boy. When they set off for home, they never imagined that he wasn't with them.

They didn't have to worry about that usually. So they said three days later, hey, he's not here. So they went back and I think I'll start at 48, and when they saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, son, why have you treated us this way?

Behold, your father and I have been anxiously looking for you, and he said to them, why? Why was it that you were looking for me? Did you not know that I would be in my Father's house? See, Jesus loved the temple.

He knew it was going to be destroyed. But he saw it at his Father's house and he couldn't imagine why his parents would have. He thought that would be the first place they went before they left. They just thought, okay, he'll come looking for me, they know I'm here. But they didn't.

But they did not understand the statement which he had made to them, and he went down with them and came to Nazareth and he continued in subjection to them, and his mother treasured all these things in her heart, and Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. So we'll go on here.

Next thing we'll talk about is this was the backdrop for the second temptation when Jesus went out into the wilderness and Satan brought him back to the temple, to the temple, set him on the top of the temple, and he said, if you're the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is threatened. He will command his angels concerning you, and in their arms they will bear you up so that you do not strike your foot against the stone. That he said to him.

On the other hand, it is written you shall not put your Lord God to the test.

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So Jesus could see that this would not be a proper thing for him to do, even though it would have enhanced his ministry. If he jumped off the temple and he didn't get hurt, that would have made news. But no, he could see that's not the way God wanted him to do things. So he didn't do that, and of course, then there's the cleansing of the temple.

I'm just going to jump down to 16, and those who were selling the doves, he said, take these things away. Stop making my father's house a place of business, and his disciples remembered that it was written, the zeal of your house will consume you. Jesus loved the temple.

This is when he's on the road or when they're traveling from the Last Supper scene to Gethsemane. He gave this parable, and I think I'll just paraphrase it. Essentially, this is the parable he gave about the husbandman and the vine that you need to. The vine needs to stay in the branch. The inspiration for that might have been as they walk past the temple, there was a carving on the side of it that looked kind of like that.

Josephus says that those clusters were as big as a man, and they're torches. They're traveling through the night, and their torches are gleaming against this wall, and you have these clusters of grapes that were hanging down, and Jesus gave them as one of his last lessons to them.

The lesson of the husbandman and the vine.

You know, Peter used the symbol or the temple quite a bit.

This is in Acts the fourth chapter, verse eight. This was after they healed the man. That was lame, I believe, and then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, told the people, if we are on trial today for benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made, well, 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 this name, this man stands here before you in good health. He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief cornerstone.

And there is salvation in no one else. For there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved. Peter used the symbolism of the temple in his ministry, and he continued that in his Epistles. When he wrote first Peter, he said, and coming to him as a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a royal priest to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in Scripture.

Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, precious cornerstone, and he who believes in him will not be disappointed. This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But to those who do not believe, the stone which the builders rejected has become the very cornerstone.

We're nearing the end of our study here, but I wanted to include this verse. This, of course, is one of our favorite kingdom verses.

Maybe I can read it on the screen here. This is Micah, the fourth chapter, verse four. It says, in the last days the mountain of God's house will be the highest of all. Is kind of symbolized by the simple mount, and people will stream to that.

It will be the most important place on earth. It will be raised above the other hills, and people all over the world will stream there to worship. People from many nations will come and say, come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of Jacob's God, that he may teach us of his

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ways and we may walk in his paths. For the Lord teaching will go out from Zion, and His Word will go out from Jerusalem. The Lord will mediate between peoples and will settle disputes between strong nations far away.

And they shall hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning work. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, nor train for war anymore. Everyone will live in peace and prosperity, enjoying their own vineyards and fig trees, for there will be nothing to make them afraid, and the Lord of Heaven's army will make this happen.

The festivals when all the people came to Jerusalem, and that one slide that I had is kind of a picture of the kingdom situation where people all over the world will be ruled out of Jerusalem, and God's peace and the joys of the kingdom will go out to all. It's a wonderful hope we have, you know.

So in closing, I would like to read this scripture.

This is Revelation, the 21st chapter, verse one.

And then I saw new heavens and new earth. For the old heaven and old earth had disappeared, and the sea was also gone, and I saw the holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband, and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, look, God's home is now among his people. He will live with them, and they will be his people.

God Himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain, for these things are gone forever, and the one sitting on the throne will say, look, I am making everything new, and when he had said to me, write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true.

And he said also, it is finished. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To all who are thirsty, I will give freely of the springs of the water of life, and all who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and He will be their people, or they will be his people.

God will have his human family back. We think that mankind lost a lot in the Garden of Eden. But God lost something too. He lost that fellowship with His human creation. But in His human arrangement, He will get that back.

May God add His blessing.