

# **Jesus Is the Fulfillment of the Temple: A Biblical Theme in the Gospel According to John**

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## **Introduction**

In ancient times, people worshiped God or gods in a sacred space. In the ancient Near East, the people built temples as their sacred places. The ancient Israelites worshiped Yahweh in the Tabernacle or “Tent of Meeting” until Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem. One of the major biblical themes, observed in the Gospel according to John, involves Jesus’ fulfillment of typology inherent in a sacred space. This paper aims to establish that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Temple because He is the Messiah, the Word of God, the Son of God, the Son of Man, and God-Incarnate by examining John 1:14, 51; 2:13-22; and 4:19-26 through extant sources available. John 1:14, 51; 2:13–22; and 4:16–24 demonstrate that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Temple through His incarnation, death, and resurrection: (1) Jesus becomes the new Tabernacle (1:14), (2) Jesus becomes the new House of God (1:51), (3) Jesus becomes the new Temple (2:13–22), and (4) Jesus explains the new center of worship through Him (4:16–24).

## **Jesus Is the New Tabernacle: John 1:14**

John 1:1, 14 states, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as the begotten Son of God the Father, which is full of

grace and truth.”<sup>1</sup> Several scholars associate John 1:14 with Jesus’ replacement of the Temple motif, and this theological theme is one of several themes presented and expected by the prologue.<sup>2</sup> In the Prologue (John 1:1–18), the author, John, identifies Jesus Christ as ὁ λόγος (“the Word”) who was with God, who was God, and who created all things. ὁ Λόγος became a human being and τὸ Φῶς (“the Light”) of human beings. Thus, ὁ λόγος was God-Incarnate. John describes the revelation of God in Jesus as the climax of prior and temporary revelations of God in the history of the people of God.<sup>3</sup>

The verb ἐσκήνωσεν (‘dwelt,’ from σκηνώω) links 1:14 with Jesus’ replacement of the Temple theme.<sup>4</sup> ὁ Λόγος ἐγένετο (“The Word became”) what he was not (σάρξ) while existing to be what He was (θεός, verse 1).<sup>5</sup> As Murray Harris explains, “To his existence as a fully divine person was added existence as a fully human person (σάρξ, ‘flesh’).”<sup>6</sup> The verb ἐσκήνωσεν in verse 14 resonates with the Tabernacle or the “tent of meeting” where YHWH encountered Moses and His people, and the glory of YHWH permeated the Tabernacle (Exod 40:34, 35) as a manifestation of His presence.<sup>7</sup> However, J. Ramsay Michaels argues that in John 1:14, “there is no *direct* reference to the

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<sup>1</sup> All English translations of the *Greek New Testament*, 5th rev. ed. (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014) are this present author’s unless otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup> Paul M. Hoskins, *Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple in the Gospel of John* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 116.

<sup>3</sup> Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John’s Gospel and Letters: The Word, the Christ, the Son of God* (Grand Rapids: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2009), 426.

<sup>4</sup> Hoskins, *Jesus*, 116–117.

<sup>5</sup> Murray J. Harris, *John*, Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015), 35.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1991), 127; Alan Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus’ Body: The Temple Theme in the Gospel of John*, vol. 220, Library of New Testament Studies (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 103.

Exodus nor to God's ancient covenant with Israel."<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, David Peterson asserts that the phrase ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν resonates with the instruction of God to Moses and the Israelites to construct a σκηνή (Exod 25:8–9) as the local site of YHWH's presence on earth, which was eventually transferred to the Temple in Jerusalem, while the Latter Prophets proclaimed that YHWH would establish His dwelling amidst His people eternally (Joel 3:17; Zech 2:10; Ezek 43:7); thus, John declares that this promise has been fulfilled through the incarnation of the eternal λόγος.<sup>9</sup>

John 1:9 conveys that Jesus "was the genuine light that enlightens every person by His coming into the world." This light could be associated with the light that radiated from the Temple that John mentions in Revelation 22.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, in Jesus, believers have witnessed the glory of God, which in the Old Testament was connected with Mount Sinai (Exod. 24:15–16), the Tabernacle (Exod. 40:34), and then the Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:10–11; Isa 6:1–4), and which was prophesied to be revealed to all humankind in the new age (Isa. 40:5).<sup>11</sup> Thus, the presence of YHWH in the Gospel according to John is not restricted in the Tabernacle or Temple anymore; God decided to dwell amid His people in a more personal way through the incarnate-Word (Word-in-the-flesh), Jesus Christ, who exhibits the glory of God the Father (2:11).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, The New International Commentary on the Old and New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2010), 79.

<sup>9</sup> David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2002), 93.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Roe Love III, "Jesus as the Temple and the Fulfillment of the Feasts: Worship in John," in *Biblical Worship: Theology for God's Glory*, ed. Benjamin K. Forrest, Walter C. Kaiser Jr., and Vernon M. Whaley, Biblical Theology for the Church (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2021), 368.

<sup>11</sup> Peterson, *Engaging*, 93–94.

<sup>12</sup> Carson, *John*, 127–128; Peterson, *Engaging*, 93; Kerr, *Jesus' Body*, 103–104.

## Jesus Is the New House of God: John 1:51

In John 1:47–51, Jesus appointed Nathaniel to be His disciple. Jesus told him in verse 48, “Before Phillip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathaniel replied to Him in verse 49, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.” Nathaniel acknowledged Jesus for He truly was with two titles—the Son of God and the King of Israel. The first title strengthens what John testified based on the Spirit’s descent upon Jesus in verse 34 (“this is the Son of God”).<sup>13</sup> As “a true Israelite” (verse 47), it was expected from Nathaniel to acknowledge “Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth” as his Lord and King.<sup>14</sup> The Jews utilized the title “King of Israel” for the Messiah, and it was again directed to Jesus in 12:13.<sup>15</sup> Thus, these two titles confirm Jesus as the Messiah or Christ.

As the Messiah, God the Son, and King of Israel, Jesus added another title. In John 1:51, Jesus said, “I solemnly tell you all, you shall see heaven standing open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” Scholars have debated on the interpretation of verse 51. Most scholars, such as Carson, Haenchen, Funk, Busse, and Köstenberger claim that verse 51 is an allusion to Jacob’s vision at Bethel (Gen. 28:12).<sup>16</sup> However, Kerr argues, “I can find in 1:51 no elements of Jacob’s dream apart from the angels ascending and descending. There is no reference to ladder, stone, and most important, Bethel.”<sup>17</sup> Moreover, Kerr expounds that although some of these elements were present in 1:51, the verse is still

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<sup>13</sup> Michaels, *John*, 132.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Carson, *John*, 162.

<sup>16</sup> Ernst Haenchen, Robert Walter Funk, and Ulrich Busse, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 166; Carson, *John*, 163; Andreas Köstenberger, “John,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 429.

<sup>17</sup> Kerr, *Jesus’ Body*, 165–166.

not connected with the Temple; thus, he asserts that there is no pre-Christian proof that Bethel is paralleled to the Temple.<sup>18</sup> Haenchen, Funk, and Busse argue that although the ladder does not appear in verse 51, the promise of Jesus is a metaphorical saying about His unceasing relationship with the Father during His earthly sojourn.<sup>19</sup> They assert, “The picture of the mediating angels is deliberately chosen so that it permits Jesus’ dwelling on earth to possess complete earthly reality.”<sup>20</sup>

According to Donald Roe Love, “Bethel is traditionally believed to be the place where the temple in Jerusalem would later be built.”<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Love argues that Jesus claims that He is Bethel.<sup>22</sup> Thus, Jesus declares that He is the house of God and the way to heaven. Furthermore, Jesus expresses to Nathaniel and the other disciples that He will be the place of much greater divine revelation than what was presented to the patriarchs and Old Testament prophets (Heb. 1:1–3); thus, Jesus will intermediate greater revelation than Abraham (John 8:58), Jacob (John 4:12–14), Moses (John 1:17; 5:45–47; 9:28–29), and Isaiah (John 12:37–41).<sup>23</sup> Jesus’ title “Son of Man” recalls the passage in Daniel 7:13–14 regarding “One like a Son of Man.”<sup>24</sup> Jesus conveys to His disciples that the “Son of Man” would be crucified as a course of exaltation (John 3:14; 8:28), provide divine revelation (John 6:27; 53); and would perform with eschatological authority (John 5:27; 9:39).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Kerr, *Jesus’ Body*, 165-166..

<sup>19</sup> Haenchen, Funk, and Busse, *John*, 166.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Love III, “Jesus as the Temple,” 369.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Köstenberger, “John,” 429.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Köstenberger, “John,” 429.

## **Jesus Is the New Temple: 2:13–22**

John 2:13–17 describes the cleansing of the Temple by Jesus and 2:18–22 conveys the response of Jesus to the Jews' asking for a sign from Him: He told them of His death and resurrection. Coloe explains that this passage in John fuses two components found separately in the Synoptics—the actions of Jesus in the Temple (John 2:14-16; Matt 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48) involving a logion about destroying and raising the Temple (John 2:19; cf. Matt. 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29); nevertheless, there are differences between the Johannine passage and the Synoptics. For example, John includes cattle and sheep in verse 14, a whip made of ropes and pouring out of coins in verse 15, his commands to the pigeon sellers in verse 16, and the disciples' recalling of Scripture in verses 17 and 22.<sup>26</sup> Kerr provides three important insights regarding the interpretation of this passage: (1) The Temple is fundamental to the narrative and the dialogue between Jesus and the Jews, (2) The explanatory remark in 2:21, ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔλεγεν περὶ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, clearly connects Jesus and the Temple, (3) This incident in the Temple transpired early in the Gospel and is the second of public acts of Jesus.<sup>27</sup> This present author likes to include another observation from this passage: There's a parallel between the disciples' recalling of what Scripture said in verse 17 and what Jesus said in verse 22. They believed what the Scripture said and what Jesus said.

### Jesus' Cleansing of the Temple: John 2:13–17

In John 2:13–17, Jesus went into the Temple in Jerusalem, drove the animals out of the Temple with a whip, angrily told the money changers to remove the pigeons out of the Temple, poured out their coins, and over-turned their tables. He told those who were selling pigeons in verse 16, “Remove these from

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<sup>26</sup> Mary Coloe, *God Dwells with Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001), 65.

<sup>27</sup> Kerr, *Jesus' Body*, 67.

here. Do not make my Father's house a marketplace." Harris claims that the protest of Jesus was not about the recommended animal sacrifices or the imbursement of the temple tax.<sup>28</sup> Jesus was concerned that the sellers were impeding genuine Gentile worship (Matt. 21:13).<sup>29</sup> When Jesus spoke to the pigeon-sellers in verse 16, the words changed from Temple (ἱερόν) in verses 14 and 15 to house (οἶκος). Coloe explains that οἶκος reflects "the most frequent designation of the Jerusalem Temple which the LXX usually calls the οἶκος, or οἶκος ἅγιος, τοῦ Θεοῦ, Κυρίου, or ναός."<sup>30</sup> Jesus identified the Temple in verse 16 as the οἶκον τοῦ πατρός. These words demonstrate Jesus' distinctive familial relationship with YHWH, and they are connected to John 1:1 and 51.<sup>31</sup> As Coloe asserts, "Because of his relationship with the Father, Jesus is the new οἶκος τοῦ Θεοῦ, for in him the glory of God is present and accessible to human experience."<sup>32</sup>

Köstenberger claims that the cleansing of the temple is a Johannine sign.<sup>33</sup> Although it does not involve the supernatural, its prophetic symbolism strongly bears a resemblance to the Old Testament *semeion* like in Isaiah 20:3.<sup>34</sup> Pitre also claims that the "cleansing of the Temple" is a symbolic display of what will eventually happen to the Temple as a whole: the cessation of the sacrifices when the Temple is destroyed (see Dan. 9:25–27).<sup>35</sup> Coloe argues that Jesus' actions in John 2:13–16 do not illustrate a cleansing or a sign of future destruction, but "the Johannine narrative clearly shows that with the

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<sup>28</sup> Harris, *John*, 64.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Coloe, *God Dwells*, 73.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 73, 77.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>33</sup> Köstenberger, *John's Gospel*, 427.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Brant James Pitre, "Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood," *Letter & Spirit* 4 (2008): 67.

coming of the incarnate logos, the Temple and its cultic functions have already been abrogated.”<sup>36</sup>

Verse 17 states, “His disciples called to mind what was written, ‘Zeal for Your house will consume me.’” John cited Psalm 69:9 (verse 10 in Hebrew). Psalm 69 discloses Davidic typology and motif of the righteous sufferer and portrays the psalmist as one who has endured disgrace for the sake of Yahweh.<sup>37</sup> Although the description of the psalmist’s zeal for God’s house is not apparent or specific in the passage, the psalmist, being consumed literally and figuratively, depicts the image conveyed by אכל (“consume”) as that of a “devouring flame” and by נפל (“fall”) as “burning coals” falling on someone.<sup>38</sup> Hoskins presents two significant propositions to comprehend the relationship between Jesus and the Temple in the Fourth Gospel regarding John 2:17 and its citation of Psalm 69:9.<sup>39</sup> First, he proposes, “If Jesus is zealous for the Lord’s house, the Temple, then it is difficult to maintain that Jesus is simply anti-Temple or anti-sacrifice, a point already hinted at by the use of ‘my Father’s house’ in 2:16.”<sup>40</sup> His second proposition involves the significance of Psalm 69 to Jesus’ demonstration, which implied more than merely grief; there is a typological relationship between the psalmist and Jesus.<sup>41</sup> John includes the quotation of Psalm 69:9 in John 2:17 to characterize Jesus’ action and to connect Jesus with the righteous sufferer of the Davidic psalm (Ps. 69).<sup>42</sup> As the Messiah (see John 1:41, 49), Jesus is recognized as “David’s greater Son.”<sup>43</sup> Moreover, Köstenberger expounds that the Temple cleansing heralds the

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<sup>36</sup> Coloe, *God Dwells*, 74.

<sup>37</sup> Köstenberger, “John,” 432.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Hoskins, *Jesus*, 110–111.

<sup>40</sup> Hoskins, *Jesus*, 110–111.

<sup>41</sup> Hoskins, *Jesus*, 111. Hoskins explains, “Psalm 69 is often quoted or alluded to in connection with Jesus’ suffering.”

<sup>42</sup> Köstenberger, “John,” 433.

<sup>43</sup> Carson, *John*, 180; Hoskins, *Jesus*, 110–111.

zeal of Jesus to restore the holy worship of God in the main sanctuary of Jerusalem, which resonated with Old Testament prophetic matters in Zechariah 14:21 and Malachi 3:1, 3; thus, “the temple clearing takes on pivotal significance for John’s portrayal of Jesus’ messianic mission.”<sup>44</sup>

### The Death and Resurrection of Jesus’ Temple: John 2:18–22

According to Attridge, “The crucial part of the episode is the dialogue between Jesus and his critics that follows the cleansing itself.”<sup>45</sup> While the Jews requested for a legitimizing sign (σημεῖον), Jesus answered and declared in verse 19, “Destroy this Temple, and I will raise it up in three days.” The reply of Jesus contains a prophecy of destruction and construction. The word ἔγερῶ depicts Jesus as the agent of His own resurrection (see 10:18).<sup>46</sup>

According to Kerr, the λύσατε in verse 19 means, “Carry on the way you are going and destroy this Temple” because the “house of God” has converted into a “house of trade.”<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, the major misunderstanding between Jesus and the Jews concerns their perception of signs; while the Jews understood Jesus’ answer as a prophetic act of legitimation, the author of John defines σημεῖον as a revelation of δόξα.<sup>48</sup> John explains in verse 21, “However, He had been speaking of His body as the Temple.” The reply of Jesus in verse 19 involves His death and resurrection. Although the remark could be understood as an apologetic explanation of Jesus’ prophecy about the destruction of the Temple, it professes that Jesus is, in the theological sense, “whatever the Temple was.”<sup>49</sup> Moreover, Gonzalez claims

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<sup>44</sup> Köstenberger, *John’s Gospel*, 427.

<sup>45</sup> Harold W. Attridge, “Temple, Tabernacle, Time, and Space in John and Hebrews,” *Early Christianity* 1, no. 2 (2010): 264.

<sup>46</sup> Harris, *John*, 66.

<sup>47</sup> Kerr, *Jesus’ Body*, 88.

<sup>48</sup> Beate Kowalski, “Die Tempelreinigung Jesu Nach Joh 2,13-25,” *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 57, no. 3 (2006): 202–03.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

that Jesus did not only declare Himself to be a temple, but He also foreshadows the replacement of the Jerusalem Temple as being established in His being in an eschatological context.<sup>50</sup> The link between the act (Temple cleansing) and the statement of Jesus in the Temple, which was inferred in the citation of Psalm 69 and through the later remembrance of the disciples (verses 17 and 22), highlights Jesus' coming death: the Temple is His body (verse 21).<sup>51</sup> As Welzen states, "The house of God is no longer the temple but the body of Jesus."<sup>52</sup>

Verse 22 states, "Thus, when He rose from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this, and they believed the Scripture and the statement (prophecy) Jesus said." The scriptural passage indicated in verse 22 is perhaps Psalm 69:9 which was also cited in verse 17.<sup>53</sup> Due to this parallel, John stresses the typological aspect of the psalm.<sup>54</sup> As a prophecy of Jesus' death and due to His zeal to establish YHWH's will for Israel, the Jewish leaders would cause His death, but Jesus would raise Himself to life again.<sup>55</sup>

In John 2:13–22, Jesus discloses His true identity and purpose at the Temple location by His authoritative act (cleansing of the Temple) and then by His statement regarding the raising up of a new Temple.<sup>56</sup> In order to convey his theological goal to his implicit readers, John utilizes figurative misunderstandings and parenthesis to portray Jesus, employs Christological logion (scriptural evidence), and includes his hermeneutics of post-Resurrection remembrance at the beginning of his Gospel in a

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<sup>50</sup> Eliezer Gonzalez, "Jesus and the Temple in John and Hebrews: Towards a New Testament Perspective." *DavarLogos* 15, no. 2 (2016): 39.

<sup>51</sup> Judith Lieu, "Temple and Synagogue in John," *New Testament Studies* 45, no. 1 (January 1999): 66.

<sup>52</sup> Huub Welzen, "The Transformation of the Temple in the Fourth Gospel," *HTS Theological Studies* 72, no. 4 (2016): 3.

<sup>53</sup> Peterson, *Engaging*, 96.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 96–97.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

reasonably significant arrangement.<sup>57</sup> Death and resurrection are the decisive, legitimizing signs of Jesus' mission.<sup>58</sup> As Peterson asserts, "John's interpretation makes it clear that Jesus becomes the true temple, the house of prayer for all nations, by means of His death and resurrection."<sup>59</sup> Its purpose is to promote faith in Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God, so that believers may have life in His name (John 20:31).<sup>60</sup>

### **Jesus Is the New Locus of Worship: John 4:19–26**

Diverse interpretations exist regarding John 4, such as historical-biographical, symbolical, salvation-historical, and Christocentric-soteriological.<sup>61</sup> Historical-biographical analysis involves the encounter of Jesus with the Samaritan woman and highlights the woman's self-awareness.<sup>62</sup> The problem with this view is that it centers on the Samaritan woman instead of Jesus when Jesus Christ is the main character of the narrative.

The symbolical view is allegorical and describes a mystical encounter between the Christian revelation, who happens to be Jesus, and the Samaritan belief, which stresses the similarities of John 4 with Gnostic philosophy.<sup>63</sup> Other allegorical interpretations claim that the five husbands in 4.17-18 signify five different pagan deities involving Mesopotamian and Syrian cities (2 Kings 17.:4–34).<sup>64</sup> However, the narrative in John 4 is not allegorical. Jesus met the woman in Sychar and most of the townspeople believed that He's the Messiah. Moreover, if the

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<sup>57</sup> Kowalski, "Die Tempelreinigung Jesu," 207.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Peterson, *Engaging*, 95.

<sup>60</sup> Kowalski, "Die Tempelreinigung Jesu," 207.

<sup>61</sup> Stephen Um, *The Theme of Temple Christology in John's Gospel* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006), 2–8.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 2–3.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 3–4.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 4.

narrative involves figurative language, John would have explained the symbolic figures.

The salvation-historical view blends the historical and soteriological analyses but is mostly sacramental.<sup>65</sup> For example, the living water of Jesus (verses 10–15) is connected to baptism and the sacramentalism of the bread of life in John 6.<sup>66</sup> However, the dialogue of Jesus with the Samaritan woman centers more on worship, the revelation of Jesus as the Messiah, and His fulfillment of the Temple, which is more in line with the Christocentric-soteriological view in which the present author adheres.<sup>67</sup>

John 4:19–26 is connected to the Temple theme in John 2. The cleansing of the Temple is compared to the old order of worship and that of the new order introduced through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, so the new order of worship, which was presented by Christ and the Holy Spirit, replaces the worship of Jerusalem and Gerizim.<sup>68</sup> In John 4:19–26, Jesus explained to the Samaritan woman what true worship is about. He affirmed that salvation comes from the Jews, just like what was written in the Old Testament, but He also encouraged her that one does not need to go to Jerusalem to worship God in the future. At the end of their dialogue, Jesus claimed that He was and is the Messiah. Thus, He is the fulfillment of the Temple through His death and resurrection.

In John 4:21, Jesus replied to the Samaritan woman, “Woman, believe Me, a time is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.” Since the Samaritan woman perceived Him to be a prophet, Jesus begins to explain to her in prophetic language, “a time is coming” (ἔρχεται ὥρα).

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<sup>65</sup> Um, *Temple Christology* 4–5.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 7–8.

<sup>68</sup> George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, vol. 36, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 59.

Beasley-Murray claims that this is an eschatological *ᾠρα*, which commences “the new age of the kingdom of God—when the worship of the Father will be tied to no place.”<sup>69</sup> Hoskins argues, “The Fourth Gospel enables one to define this hour as the time of Jesus’ death, resurrection, and exaltation.”<sup>70</sup> Moreover, Carson argues that the relative claims of Jerusalem and Gerizim become trivial because both places are about to be circumvented by those who genuinely worship the Father.<sup>71</sup> Jesus promises the woman that there will be a future where worshiping the Father does not have to be in Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem.<sup>72</sup> It has never been about the place of worship; it has always been about the presence of YHWH.

Jesus also said in verse 22, “You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, since salvation proceeds from the Jews.” Jesus made a stark contrast between Samaritans and Jews because the Samaritans did not know God as the Jews had known Him, as the object of worship.<sup>73</sup> The statement that Jesus made implies that (in contrast to the Samaritans) the worship of the Jews lies upon the revelation that educates them on how to worship God properly. Thus, the worship of the Samaritans only becomes a reliable standard for right worship in those instances where it aligns with Jewish worship.<sup>74</sup> “Salvation is from the Jews” because the Messiah, who happens to be the Savior of the world, is from the Jewish heritage. Both the Hebrew Bible and the Samaritan Pentateuch declare that the promised Savior, whether regarded as Messiah or Taheb, would come from Judah, (Gen. 49:10).<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, Jesus told the Samaritan woman that He is the Messiah in verse 26.

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<sup>69</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, 61.

<sup>70</sup> Hoskins, *Jesus*, 140.

<sup>71</sup> Carson, *John*, 223.

<sup>72</sup> Michaels, *John*, 250.

<sup>73</sup> Carson, *John*, 223; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 62.

<sup>74</sup> Hoskins, *Jesus*, 139.

<sup>75</sup> Carson, *John*, 223.

Jesus proclaimed in verses 23–24, “Nevertheless, the time is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father seeks such as those who worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth.” To comprehend the phrase, “in spirit and truth” one must understand that “God is spirit” (4:24). “God is spirit” is not metaphysical description of God, but a depiction of the nature of God as He reveals Himself to human beings.<sup>76</sup> The significance of truth to genuine worship involves Jesus as the truth and the one who imparts truth.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, Gerhard Kittel expounds that πνεῦμα (“spirit”) and ἀλήθεια (“truth”) in verse 23 denote “the sphere of divine essence and occurrence as distinct from human (3:6–8).”<sup>78</sup> Thus, true worship occurs as established by the πνεῦμα of God, and if ἀλήθεια is included, it implies that such worship happens only “as determined by the revelation accomplished in Jesus (verse 25), and consequently as determined by the Revealer who is the only way of access to God (1:18; 14:6).”<sup>79</sup>

Worship must be real and sincere because God expects His worshipers to correspond with His nature. As Michaels states, “Worship ‘in Spirit and truth’ is worship of ‘the Father,’ and worship of ‘the Father’ is worship ‘in Spirit and in truth.’”<sup>80</sup> He asserts that Jesus identified the proper place of worship positively, which is “in spirit and truth.”<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, D.A. Carson is correct when he says that this kind of worship takes place only in and through Jesus Christ. As Carson states, “He is the true Temple (2:19–22), he is the resurrection and the life (11:25).”<sup>82</sup> The passion and glorification of Jesus signify the

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<sup>76</sup> Hoskins, *Jesus*, 141.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>78</sup> Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 232, 246–47.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Michaels, *John*, 252.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> Carson, *John*, 224.

defining moment upon which the offering of the Holy Spirit relies upon (7:38–39; 16:7), but that defining moment in salvation-history is achievable only because of who Jesus is.<sup>83</sup> As Carson furthers, “Precisely for that reason, the hour is not only ‘coming’ but also ‘has now come.’”<sup>84</sup> Having foretold the obsolescence of the Jerusalem Temple as the special place for true worship (4:21), Jesus announces the advent of worship ‘in spirit and truth’ (4:23–24). The presentation of this genuine worship suits the development in 1:14, 51. When Jesus replaces the Temple, He also accomplishes the arrangements linking to the Temple, which foreshadow Him and the salvation that He gives.<sup>85</sup>

The Samaritan woman said in John 4:25, “I know that the Messiah, who is called Christ, is coming. When He appears, He will disclose all things to us.” Jesus replied in verse 26, “I am He, the One speaking to you.” The heart of true worship is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has fulfilled and replaced the sacred places and all the rituals related to them, which include the Temple in Jerusalem and the Samaritans’ place of worship in Mount Gerizim.<sup>86</sup>

## **Conclusion**

After examining John 1:14, 51; 2:13–22; and 4:19–24, the passages demonstrate that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Tabernacle and the Temple as the “House of God” through His incarnation, death, and resurrection. Jesus has fulfilled the new Tabernacle (1:14), the new House of God (1:51), and the New Temple (2:13–22). The new center or locus of worship involves having a proper relationship with God through Jesus Christ (4:19–24).

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<sup>83</sup> Carson, *John*, 224.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Hoskins, *Jesus*, 136.

<sup>86</sup> Kerr, *Jesus’ Body*, 195; Hoskins, *Jesus*, 145.

Since Jesus is the fulfillment of the Temple (the “House of God”), people can draw near to God and worship Him wherever they are. Through the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, those who believe and trust in Him as their Savior, Lord, and God could have a proper relationship with God and worship Him. Through the blood of Jesus Christ, people could enter the presence of Yahweh without going to a physical sacred space.

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