

**LIFEGROUP STUDY**  
**WITH: GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE**  
**2021-11-21**

**LEADER NOTES**

**OVERVIEW**

Welcome back to our study on the theme of the temple in the Bible. This week we're going to look at how the temple structure and system in the Old Testament are actually a foreshadowing of Jesus who would be "greater than the temple." In this study we hope that you'll come to see that the whole sacrificial system and priestly class were meant to point us to Jesus.

**ICEBREAKER**

The first time I went to an NFL football game I was shocked at how large the stadium was and how many people were in attendance. It was awe inspiring. What places or moments in your life would you describe as awe inducing?

**STUDY**

1. What do you remember from the sermon on Sunday? Was there anything that was particularly meaningful to you or that you had questions about?
2. The temple system was a reminder that our sin separates us from a holy God. Have you ever felt separated from God or like God was far from you? What caused this and what did it feel like?

**3. GENESIS 28 & JOHN 1**

In this section of the study we're going to look at a passage from Genesis and from the gospel of John and see what connections we can make.

A simple definition of a temple is a place where God's space and human space overlap. It's where heaven and earth are united. In Genesis chapter 28 verses 10-16 Jacob gets a glimpse of heaven and earth being united. **Read Genesis 28:10-16 together and talk about what you notice about the passage.**

*Leader Note: Note how Jacob calls out the presence of God and sees the union of heaven and earth.*

In John chapter 1 Jesus meets a man named Nathanael and tells him something rather peculiar. Read John 1:43-50. **What connections can you make between what Jesus is saying here and the story from Genesis 28 that we just looked at?**

**What is Jesus getting at by making this connection? What is he saying to Nathanael?**

*Leader Note: Be sure to make the connection between Genesis 28:12 and John 1:50. Look at the words “ascending and descending”. In Genesis 28 the connection between heaven and earth was the stairway. In John 1 Jesus is pointing to himself as the stairway. In other words, we have here Jesus claiming to be the new place where heaven and earth are united.*

#### 4. JOHN 1 & MARK 2

Next, we’re going to look at two passages that each teach us something about Jesus and then discuss how these two ideas go together.

Read John 1:1-14.

In John 1:14, John tells us that Jesus came to dwell or “tabernacle” among us. This is hugely significant as John is saying that the presence of God was on the move. It’s like the temple was now walking around.

Read Mark 2:1-12.

In Mark 2:1-12, Jesus says that he has the authority to forgive. Prior to this, forgiveness was always connected to the temple sacrificial system and to the priests. And yet here, Jesus takes on the role of temple (God’s presence) and priest (intermediary between humans and God).

Putting these two passages together, explain in your own words why what Jesus was doing and saying was so unique.

What do you think it would have been like to be in the house when Jesus forgave the man’s sins and healed him?

5. Read Hebrews 10:11-18. In the Old Testament there was an elaborate sacrificial system (vs 11). In this passage of Hebrews, what is the reason given that we no longer need to make animal sacrifices?

*Leader Note: Because Jesus sacrificed his perfect life there is now no need for any more sacrifices for sin. Jesus’ sacrifice is “for all time” (vs. 12).*

Do you find it easy or difficult to trust that Jesus’ sacrifice is enough to cover your sins?

Are you ever tempted to think that you need to do something extra to earn God's love?

6. Read Hebrews 4:14-16

What do think of the idea of coming boldly before God? Is this natural to you or is it hard to believe that you can come boldly before God?

Think about people who are not followers of Jesus. How do you think they perceive their access to God?

### **EXPERIENCING GOD**

Read Mark 15:37-38

When Jesus died upon the cross, the heavy curtain which separated the holy of holies from the holy place in the temple was torn in two from the top down. It was the symbolic demonstration that the presence of God was no longer limited to one place, but was now, in Christ, made available to the whole world.

As a group take some time to reflect on this truth.

Thank God for where he has been present with you this week.

And ask God to make you aware of his presence more this coming week.

### **PRAYER: Missions Uganda**

Pray for our Partner Church in Kitigoma Uganda as they conduct outreaches this month for kids, youth and the elderly. The impact of these events has huge potential to reach people with the love of Christ, and the church's profile as a caring community is always elevated.

Pray for Pastor Robert and Justine, for Shadrach and Elizabeth, who lead and direct the ministry, and for their children.