

Temples of the Ancient Near East

How do the elements of our church service reflect our theological understanding?



The Influence of Temples



604 occurrences in the OT







Courtyard

A photograph of an ancient Egyptian temple courtyard. The scene is dominated by two large, dark, rectangular pylons that frame a central path. In the background, a tall, slender obelisk rises against a clear blue sky. The ground in the foreground is a light-colored, textured surface, possibly sand or gravel. The overall lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

The courtyard was a large open room without a roof. The outer walls showed scenes of the pharaoh in battle. The inner walls showed the pharaoh making offerings to the gods and goddesses. People were only allowed to enter the temple courtyard on festival days.

Outer Hall

The hypostyle hall was a large room with columns. Most of the room was dark except that the centre aisle was lit by small windows cut into the roof. Only the important priests and the pharaoh were allowed to enter the hypostyle hall. This room would have been used for performing religious rituals.



Inner Hall

The second hall was filled with columns and was very dark. Only the high priests and the pharaoh could ever enter this part of the temple.

The sanctuary was the most special and important part of the temple. It was a very dark and mysterious place. Only the high priests and the pharaoh could ever enter the sanctuary. In the middle of the sanctuary stood the shrine where the statue of the god or goddess was kept.



The ancient Egyptians believed that sometimes during rituals the god or goddess would enter the statue.

Statue



The sacred lake was a pool of water next to the temple. It represented the world before time began. The priests used water from the sacred lake to perform rituals in the temple.



Sacred Lake

Similarities Between Pagan Temples & the Jewish Temple



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① Purpose

- a) Single deity worship
- b) Sacrifices and offerings



Similarities Between Pagan Temples & the Jewish Temple

① Purpose

- a) Single deity worship
- b) Sacrifices and offerings
- c) Palace of the deity
- d) Entrance for priests only
- e) Treasury
- f) Primary gathering place



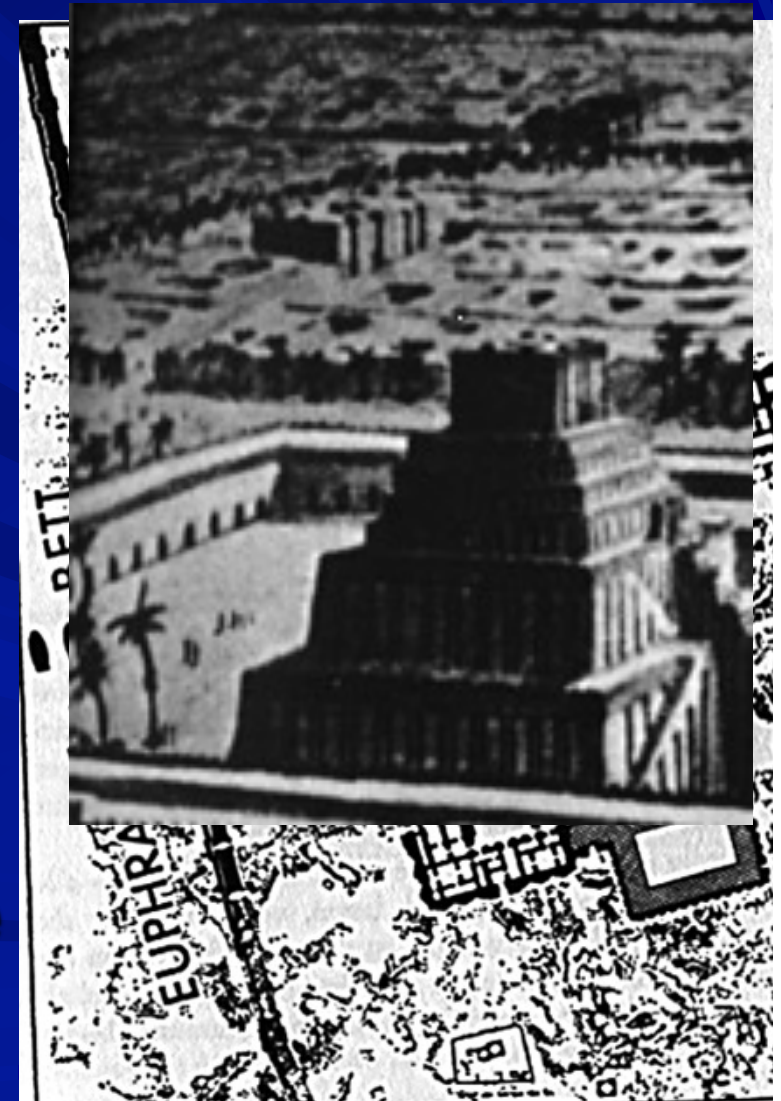
Similarities Continued

② Location

- a) High elevation
- b) Near king's palace

③ Architecture

- a) Portable shrines
- b) Tripartite (3 sections)
- c) Twin pillars
- d) Decorations
- e) Cosmological significance



We Have Come into His House

**We have come into His house,
and gathered in His name to worship Him (2x).**

**We have come into His house,
and gathered in His name
to worship Christ the Lord,
Worship Him,
Jesus Christ Our Lord.**





Our GOD
is an
Awesome
GOD

Differences Between the Temples

Pagan

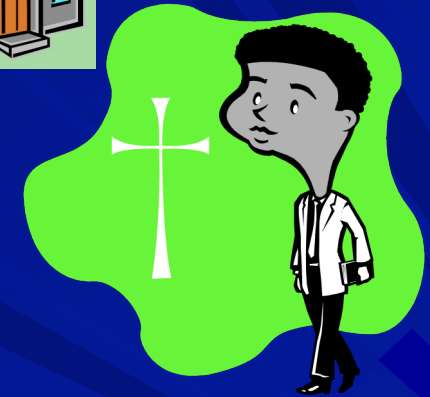
- Multiple
- To appease the god
- No covenant
- “Better” place to pray
- Bad worship motive
- Many animal types
- Human sacrifice OK

Jewish


- Single
- To hear from Yahweh
- Covenant with Yahweh
- Prayer for all nations
- Worship to glorify God
- Only unblemished ones
- Animals alone sacrificed

What is the “temple” today?

- 1) Church building?
- 2) Church priests?



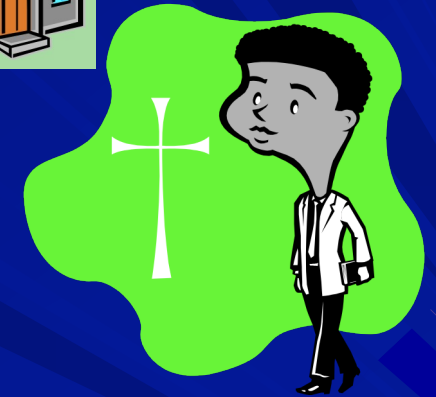
1 Peter 2:5 (NIV)



“You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

What is the “temple” today?

- 1) Church building?
- 2) Church priests?
- 3) Bodies of individual believers

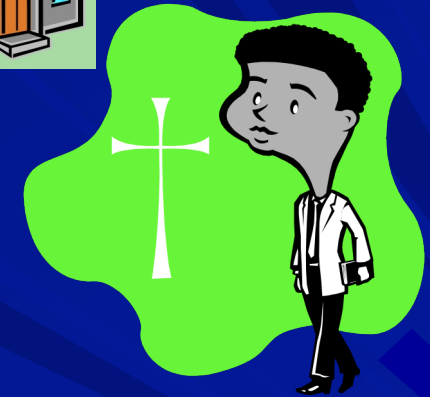


1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NIV)

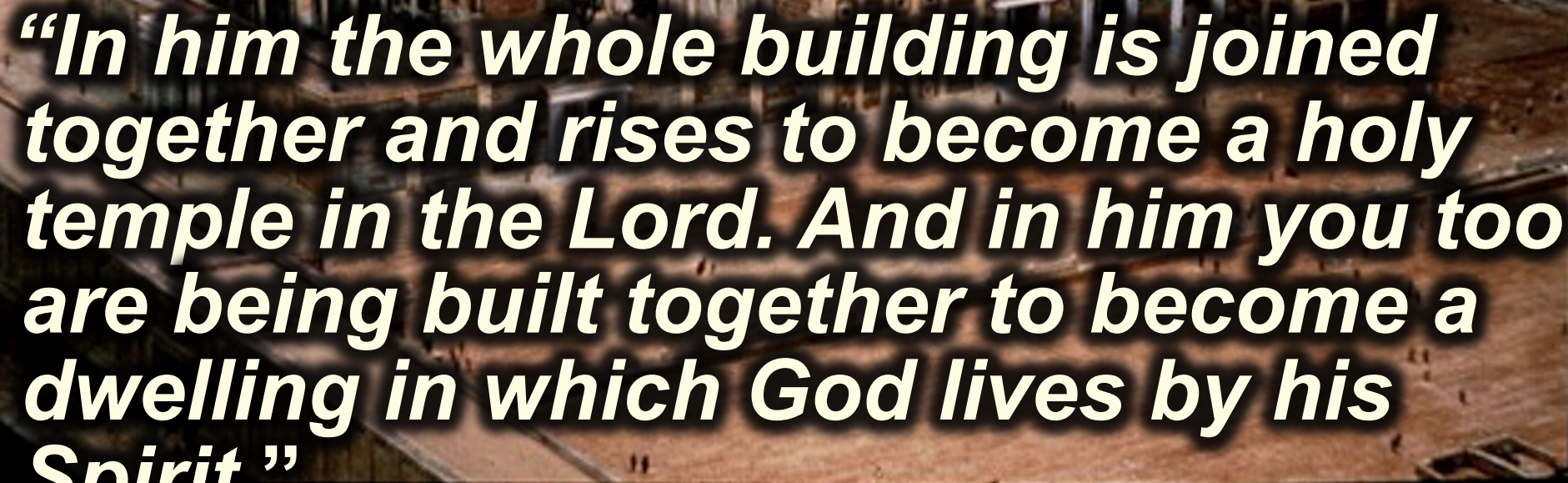
“Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.”

What is the “temple” today?

- 1) Church building?
- 2) Church priests?
- 3) Bodies of individual believers
- 4) Universal church



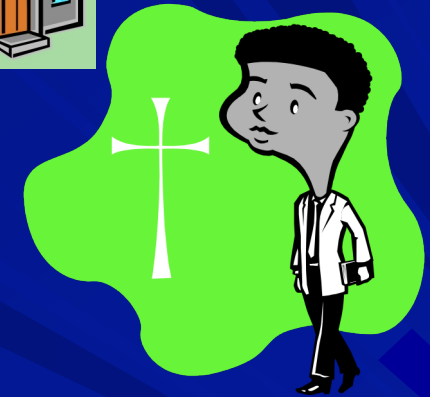
Ephesians 2:21-22 (NIV)



“In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

What is the “temple” today?

- 1) Church building?
- 2) Church priests?
- 3) Bodies of individual believers
- 4) Universal church
- 5) Tribulation & millennial temples
- 6) Heavenly temple



“...and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”

“Now the earth formless and empty, darkness was over the the surface of the deep...”

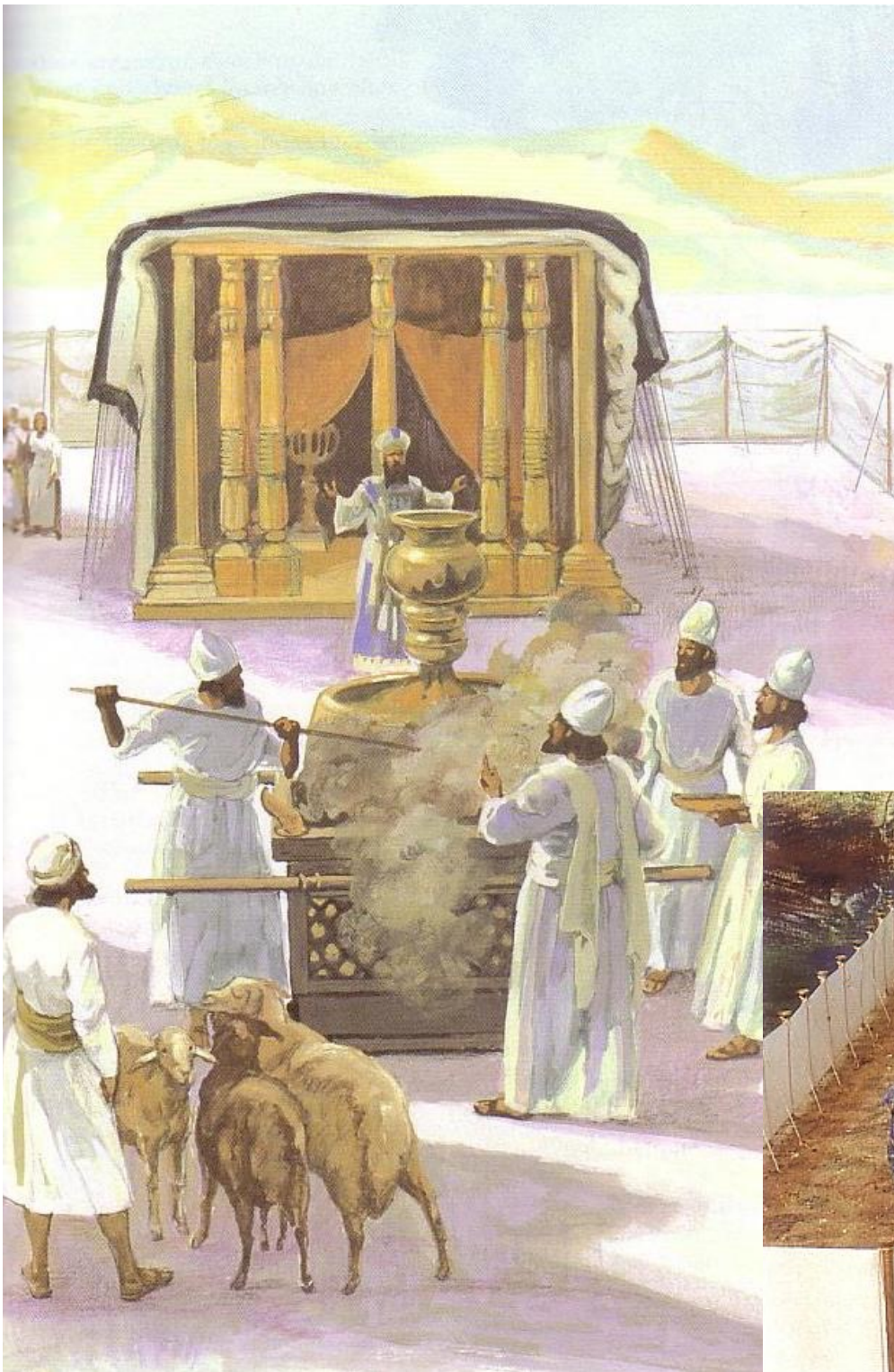
Genesis 1:2 *NIV*

“...God's Spirit brooded like a bird above the watery abyss.”

“Earth was a soup of nothingness, a bottomless emptiness, an inky blackness...”

Genesis 1:2 *The Message*

The Tabernacle



7

The Tabernacle

God sets up a place for Him to dwell as King



The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

MOSES

Exodus

Sinai

M - C - C

Kadesh Barnea

THE TABERNACLE

**Then the cloud
covered the tent of
meeting, and the
glory of the LORD
filled the tabernacle.**

Exodus 40:34 ESV

***God's presence
filled his new
palace!***



Join the Exodus journey and experience
the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

The Spirit also came upon judges, prophets, and kings in the Old Testament



God's Presence Indwelt Solomon's Temple





Ezekiel 1

Mt. of Olives

I. Clearing of the temple MONDAY

Mt 21:10—17
Mk 11:15—18
Lk 19:45—48

The next day he returned to the temple and found the court of the Gentiles full of traders and money changers making a large profit as they gave out Jewish coins in exchange for "pagan" money. Jesus drove them out and overturned their tables.

5. Day of controversy and parables

TUESDAY Mt 21:23—24:51;
Mk 11:27—13:37; Lk 20:1—21:36

IN JERUSALEM

Jesus evaded the traps set by the priests.

ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES OVERLOOKING JERUSALEM (Tuesday afternoon, exact location unknown)

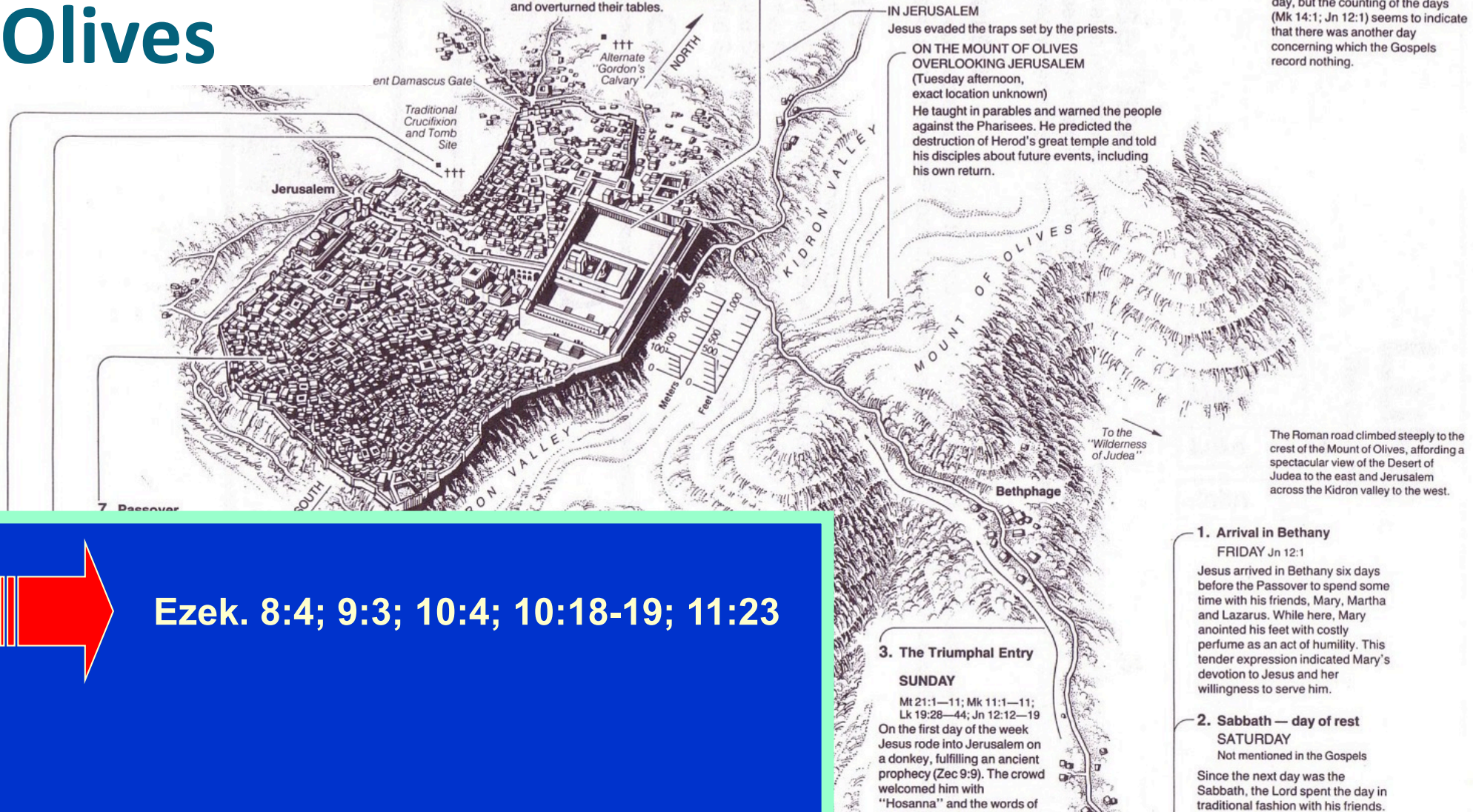
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6. Day of rest WEDNESDAY

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The Scriptures do not mention this day, but the counting of the days (Mk 14:1; Jn 12:1) seems to indicate that there was another day concerning which the Gospels record nothing.



The Roman road climbed steeply to the crest of the Mount of Olives, affording a spectacular view of the Desert of Judea to the east and Jerusalem across the Kidron valley to the west.

1. Arrival in Bethany

FRIDAY Jn 12:1

Jesus arrived in Bethany six days before the Passover to spend some time with his friends, Mary, Martha and Lazarus. While here, Mary anointed his feet with costly perfume as an act of humility. This tender expression indicated Mary's devotion to Jesus and her willingness to serve him.

2. Sabbath — day of rest

SATURDAY

Not mentioned in the Gospels

Since the next day was the Sabbath, the Lord spent the day in traditional fashion with his friends.

3. The Triumphal Entry

SUNDAY

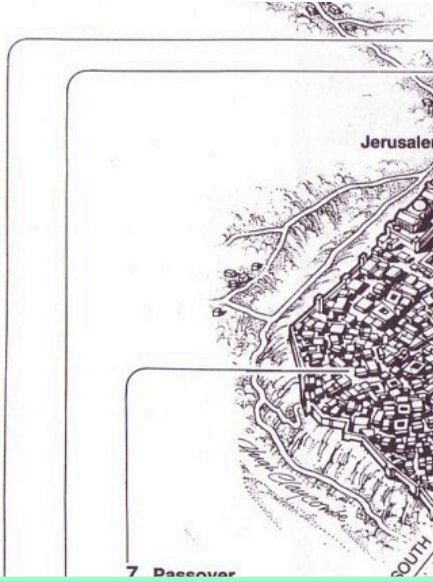
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Ezek. 8:4; 9:3; 10:4; 10:18-19; 11:23

The Spirit Leaves & Returns

Mt. of Olives



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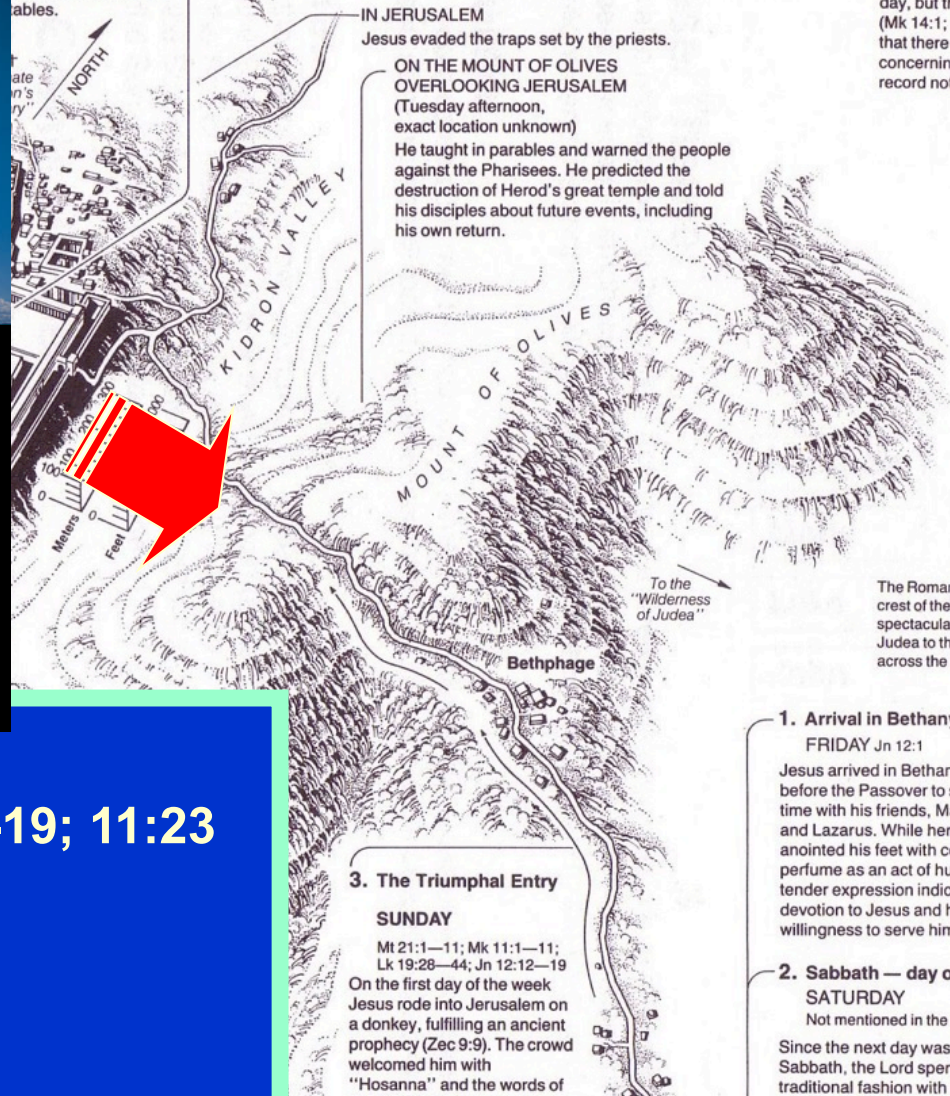
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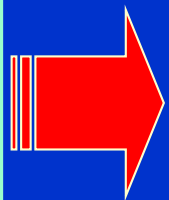
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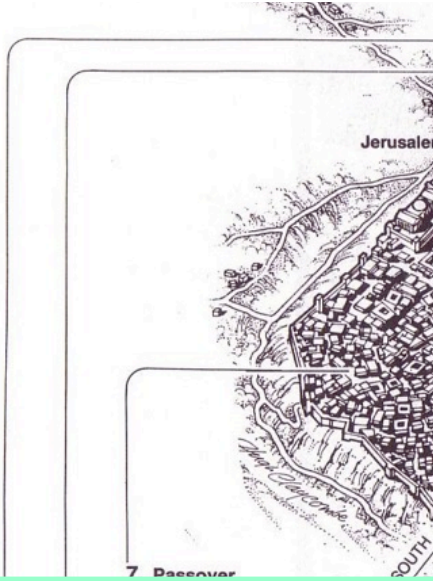
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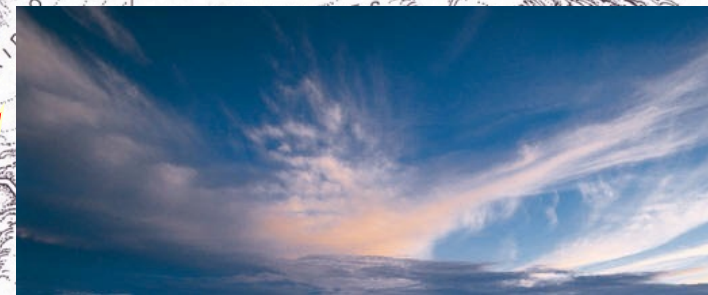
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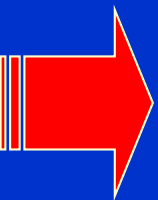
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"wilderness of Judea"

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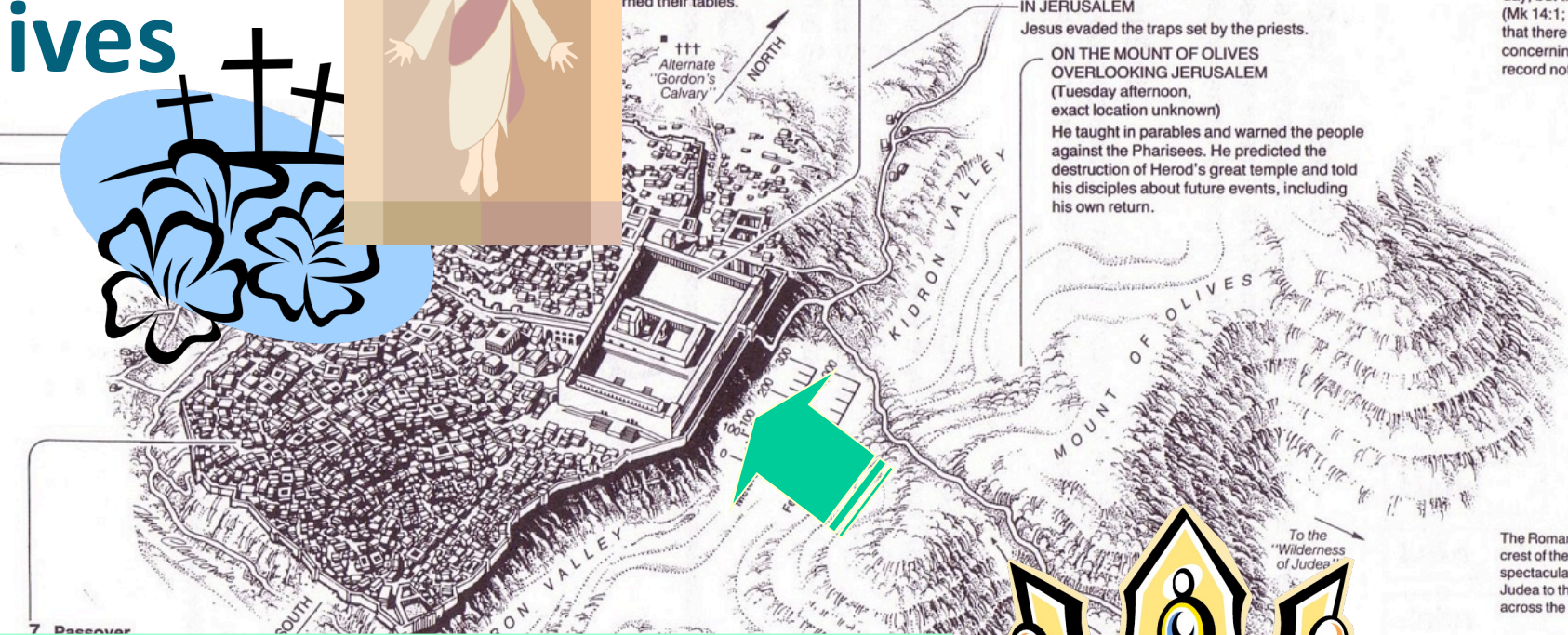


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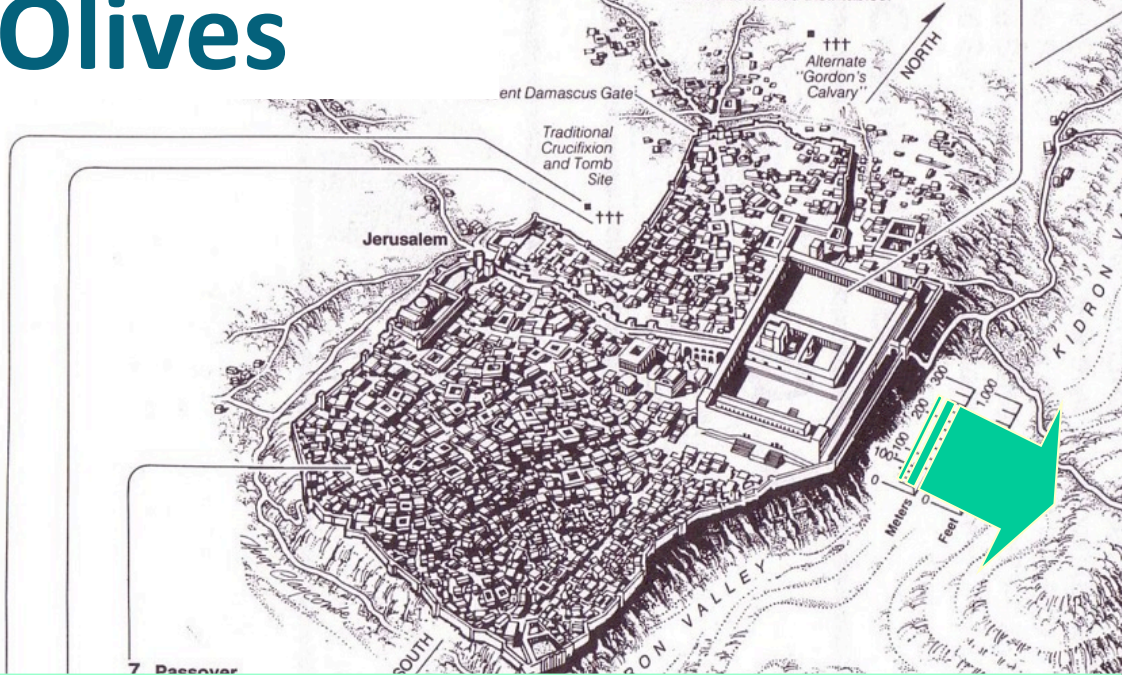
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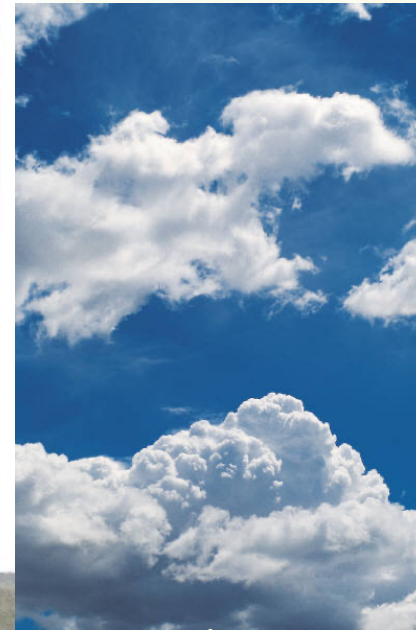
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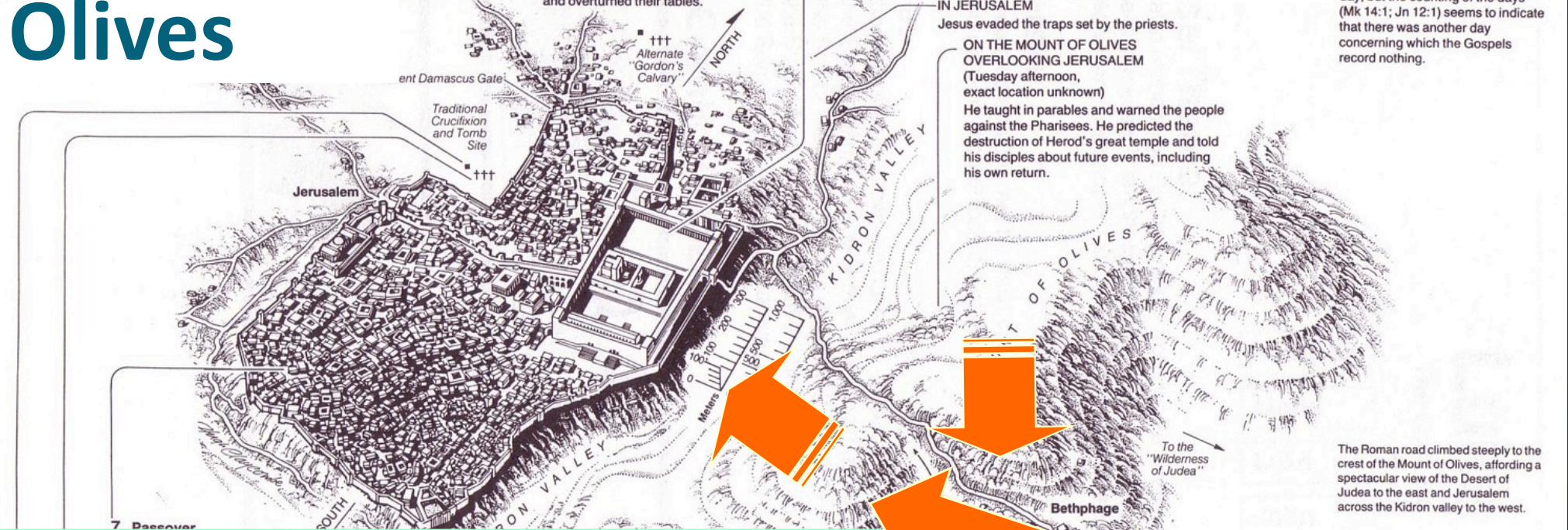
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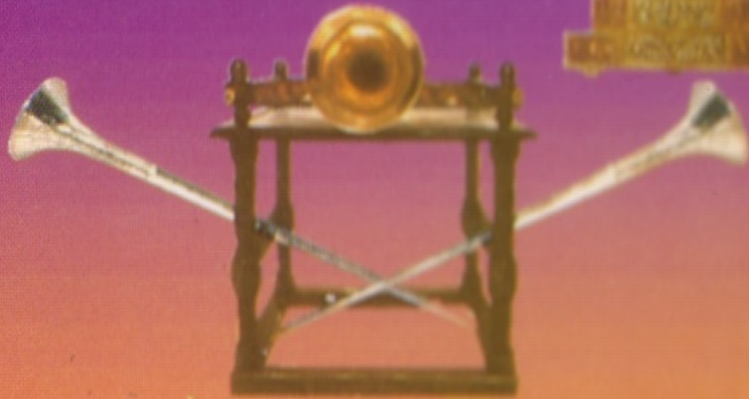
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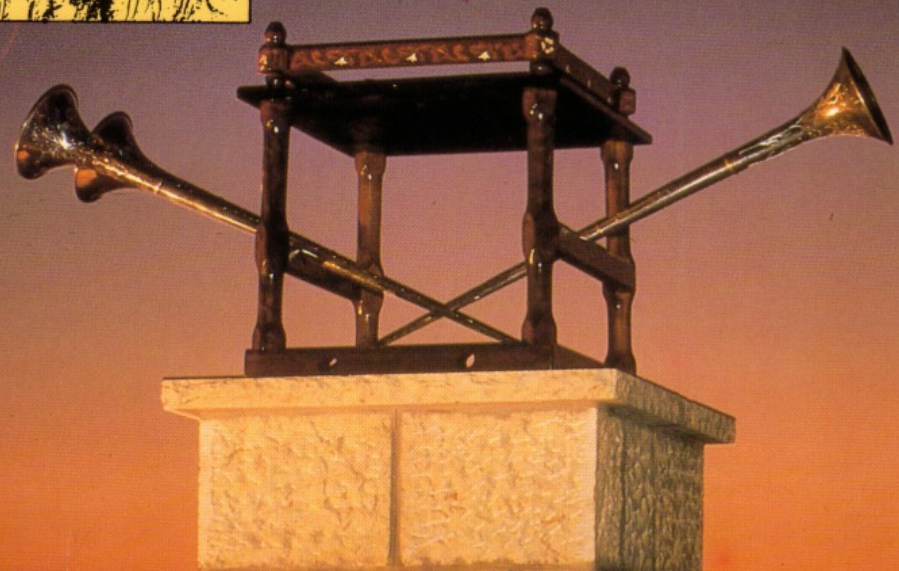
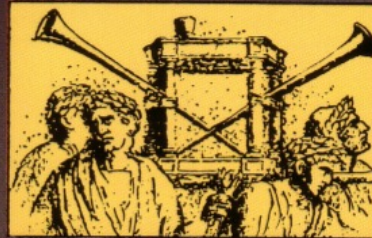
Acts 1:11; Zech. 14:4; Ezek. 43:1-5

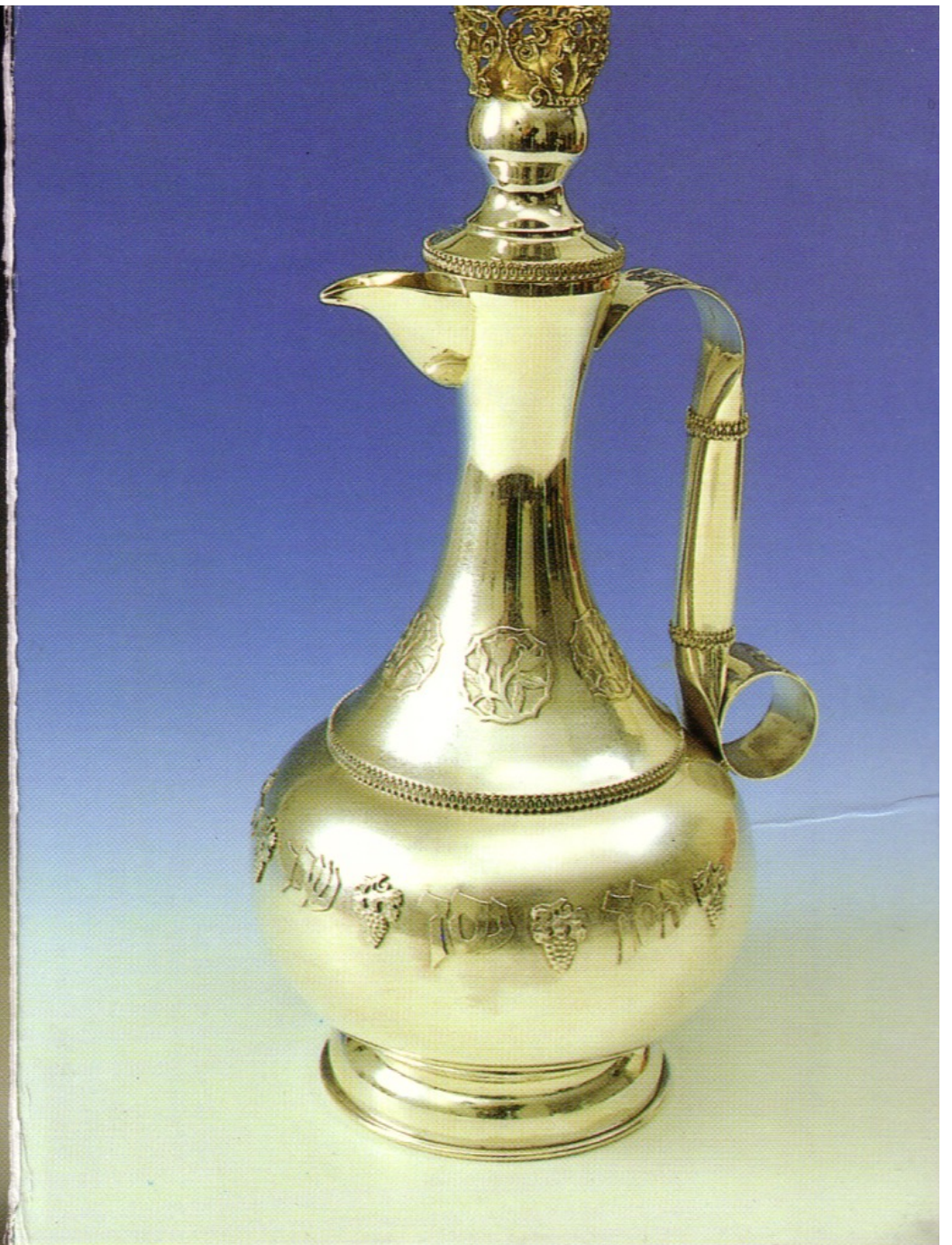
The Spirit Leaves & Returns

מכון המקדש
THE TEMPLE
INSTITUTE



Preparations for the Third Temple





The harp and silver decanter

A harp and incense chalice



Menorah (Lampstand)





www.antipas.org/.../ezekiels_temple/ezekiels_temple.html

VIEW OF THE SANCTUARY (Ezekiel 40-47)

We Have Come into His House

We have come into His house,
and gathered in His name to worship Him (2x).

We have come into His house,
and gathered in His name
to worship Christ the Lord,
Worship Him,
Jesus Christ Our Lord.



That's Where God Is

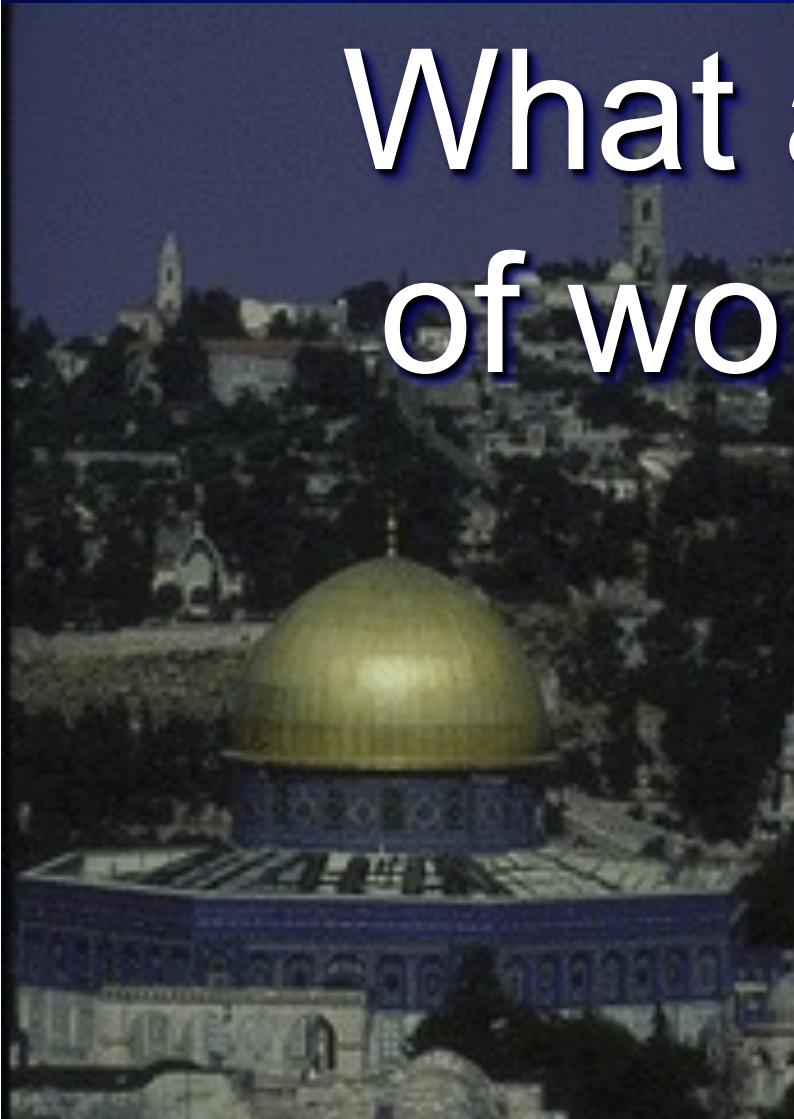
When His people come together,
that's where God is;

When our spirits join in worship,
that's where God is;

For the Lord doesn't dwell in houses of stone
but in the hearts of the ones He calls His
own.

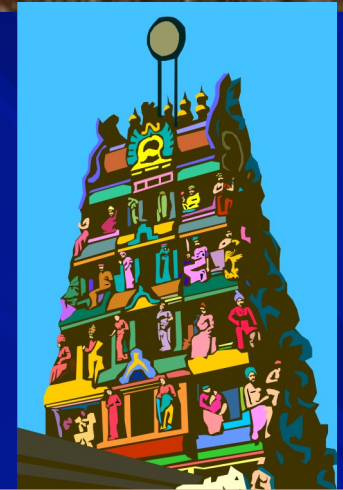
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What about places of worship today?



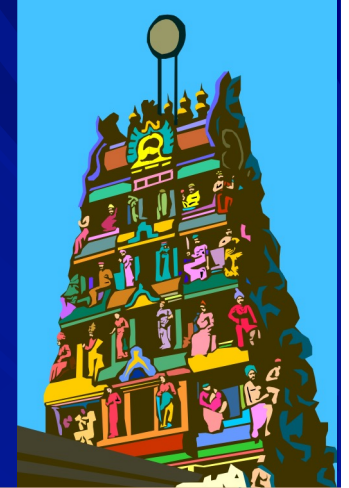
What is a biblical view of pagan temples, mosques, and synagogues today?

- Tourist attractions?
- Alternate places of worship?
- Houses of demons?



Practical Issues for Small Groups

- Is Paul's **synagogue** ministry a model for our temple ministry today? Why?
- Should you **worship** at temples? Why?
- Should you even **visit** temples? Why?

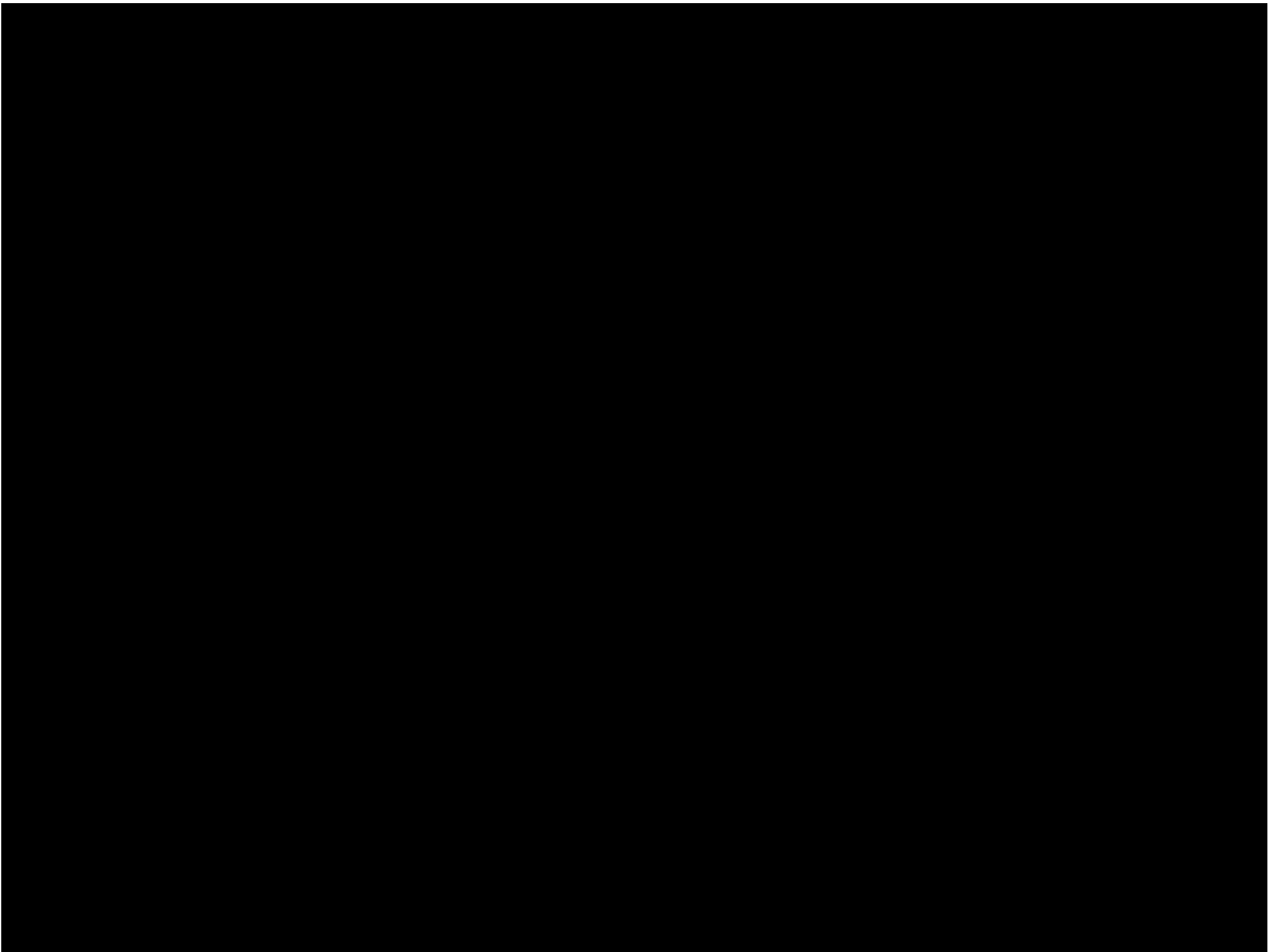




“For I KNOW the PLANS I have for YOU,”
says the LORD.

“They are plans for GOOD and not for disaster,
To give you a FUTURE and a HOPE.”

— *Jeremiah 29:11 NLT*



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