

# A Brief Overview of Scripture

by Fr. Dustin

When God created the world, he meant for it to be his temple, the place where he resided. Humans were meant to be priests in this temple by serving as two way mirrors: reflecting God's good stewardship into the world, and reflecting creation's praises and thanksgiving back to God. However, we failed (the first "Fall"). We turned inward, focusing on ourselves believing that we were "gods" in our right, so we were cast out of paradise and subjected to death so that we would not go on sinning.

God decided to set things right by "recreating," his people. This began by calling Abraham, but Abraham's descendent's ended up being enslaved in Egypt (another "Fall" and "death"). God again decided to "recreate" his people again through the creation of Israel. He freed them from Egypt (the Exodus), gave them the Law (similar to the command of the "forbidden fruit" in the Garden of Eden), and gifted them the Promised Land. He vowed to be present among them through his presence in the Tabernacle and, later, the Temple ... as long as they followed his Law (see the last few chapters of Deuteronomy).

However, Israel rejected God as their king and asked for a human king instead (another "Fall"). These kings ended up enslaving the people and not caring for the most vulnerable in society (see Samuel's warning in I Sam 8). So, as a punishment, God exiled them to Assyria and Babylon (another sort of "death"). The Prophets explain the meaning of the Exile, and promise that God will set things right by gathering his people once more.

By the time of Christ, the people had returned to the Promised Land, but God had not returned to the Temple and the people were enslaved by a new "Pharaoh," the Romans. Israel was, functionally, still in the Exile and needed a new Exodus to free them.

Christ, as the new "Moses" (the prophet who gave the Law, built the Tabernacle, and led the people through the desert) and as the new "Joshua" (the prophet who led the people into the Promised Land), leads a new Exodus by giving us the Spiritual Law, written on our hearts, and he replaces the Tabernacle (or Temple) by creating a community that is formed around him based on trust (a better translation of "belief") rather than blood (as an ethnic community). This new community is a New Israel—God starting to create a new world—and the life of this community is lived out through Table-Fellowship.

Through his death, Christ becomes the Passover Lamb of the Exodus and destroys the real "Pharaoh's" that have enslaved us: Satan and death. Jesus sets us free to choose him as our new Lord. The Kingdom of God and the defeat of the enemies is manifested through the healing of peoples' illnesses and the casting out of demons.

This freedom that we've been given through Christ means that we live a particular lifestyle: a life lived by the rule of love. We are to avoid immorality and, instead, bear one another's burdens. This makes love manifest, and it's how we walk the Way.

Finally, Christ promises to come again to finish this Exodus and bring us into the Promised Land (the Kingdom of God) by resurrecting us from the dead and transforming our old world into a new one, one in which heaven and earth are united.