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Maynard Dorow

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, dorow@csp.edu

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SHORT TITLE

NAOZ AS A NEW TESTAMENT FIGURE FOR THE CHURCH

NAOZ AS A N.T. FIGURE FOR THE CHURCH

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of New Testament Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

Maynard W. Dorow

June 1956

Approved by: Maxie H. Fraumeni
Advisor

Victor Bartling
Reader

SHORT TITLE

ΝΑΟΣ AS A N.T. FIGURE FOR THE CHURCH

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of 'temple' as a New Testament figure for the Church. The purpose has been to determine what this figure contributes to our understanding of the

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the temple, in order to determine what it particularly conveys to us concerning the Church.

This thesis follows the pattern of a word study. The Greek word for temple which is used as a figure for the Church is **ναός**. The second chapter provides a brief study of the meaning of the word and a sketch of its use in the New Testament. Chapter III takes up John 2:19, along with related passages in the synoptic Gospels and Acts, in the attempt to show that Jesus' use there of 'temple' refers

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of "temple" as a New Testament figure for the Church. The purpose has been to determine what this figure contributes to our understanding of the Church in the New Testament.

The writer came to study this subject through an interest in the New Testament concept of the Church. The Church has been the subject of much recent theological literature, in which the figure most often employed is "body of Christ." This image, of which St. Paul makes extensive use in his epistles, is particularly useful for expressing the unity and interdependence of the members of the Church and for expressing the headship of the Church in Christ. This thesis has considered another figure for the Church, the temple, in order to determine what it particularly conveys to us concerning the Church.

This thesis follows the pattern of a word study. The Greek word for temple which is used as a figure for the Church is *ναός*. The second chapter provides a brief study of the meaning of the word and a sketch of its use in the New Testament. Chapter III takes up John 2:19, along with related passages in the synoptic Gospels and Acts, in the attempt to show that Jesus' use there of "temple" refers

both to Himself and to the community of believers which He would gather. Chapter IV shows that such a community was implied in the concept of Messiah as well as in Jesus' own proclamation, and then considers St. Paul's direct application of "temple" to the New Testament community, the Church. Chapter V looks at the figurative use of *ναός* in the Revelation of St. John. The final chapter sets forth a summary of this thesis.

The effort was made to carry out this study within a Biblical framework. The material draws primarily on the passages in which *ναός* occurs and on related Biblical materials. For the exegetical material it was necessary to draw heavily on commentaries. Quotations from the Bible are from the Revised Standard Version.

¹Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, edited and augmented by Henry S. Jones and Robert Bevan Woodhouse (New edition; Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 1160.

²Otto Michel, "Ναός," *Encyclopädisches Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1942), IV, 804.

³Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Corrected edition; New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Co., c. 1886), p. 422.

CHAPTER II

ΝΑΟΣ : THE PLACE OF GOD'S PRESENCE TO MEN

The word ναός is used in classical Greek for the "inmost part of a temple" or "shrine," containing the image of the god (e.g., Herodotus 1:183, 6:19, Xenophon, Apologia Socratis, 15).¹ It stems from the verb ναίω, meaning "to dwell" or "to inhabit." While the meaning of the verb is general, the noun has a special cultic meaning, viz., the "dwelling place" of a god.² The ναός, also called δόμος or ἑκηκόσ, is to be distinguished from ἱερόν, the entire consecrated enclosure of the temple.³

The same distinction between ναός and ἱερόν is observed in the Bible. In the LXX ναός translates הַיְקוּלָה most frequently and is used of the temple at Jerusalem, usually referring to the sanctuary consisting of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.⁴ In the New Testament the

¹Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, edited and augmented by Henry S. Jones and Roderick McKenzie (New edition; Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 1160.

²Otto Michel, "Ναός," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1942), IV, 884.

³Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected edition; New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Co., c.1886), p. 422.

⁴Ibid.

distinction becomes more consistent, ἱερόν referring to a part of or the whole sacred enclosure, including the entire aggregate of buildings, balconies, porticos, and courts belonging to the temple, and ναός to the sanctuary into which no one but the priests were allowed to enter.

To the Jews the sanctuary was the special place of God's presence among His people. In it was kept the Ark of the Covenant, which from Israel's earliest history was closely associated with the presence of God. It was the place of the glory (Hebrew, קֶדְשׁ) of God, that which men could apprehend of the presence of God on earth. For this reason every desecration of the temple was assiduously avoided and its defilement severely penalized (cf. Lev. 15:31; Num. 19:20). For this same reason we can understand how the Jews could develop a superstitious confidence in the inviolability of the temple place and that they should cling so stubbornly to the temple and its cultus even when it had been superseded by Christ.

What concerns us most in this study is the New Testament use of ναός for the new spiritual temple, the Church. This usage apparently goes back to Jesus' temple-saying in John 2:19, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," in which Jesus speaks both of Himself and of the new spiritual temple. Later St. Paul uses ναός as a metaphor for the community of believers, the Church (1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21), as well as for the individual

Christian. The significance of this use of $\nu\alpha\acute{o}\varsigma$, as we shall try to demonstrate below, is that in Christ's death and resurrection the old temple as the place of God's presence is superseded, and that in its place He raises a spiritual temple, the Church, in which God is present to men. Finally, in the New Jerusalem envisioned in Rev. 21:22 there is no $\nu\alpha\acute{o}\varsigma$ at all, because God and the Lamb are themselves that temple.

This saying is related in the testimony of the high priest at Jesus' trial (Matt. 26:63, Mark 14:59, Luke 22:71, John 8:17), and perhaps indirectly in the testimony of Pilate (John 19:9) and of Pontius Pilate (John 19:10). In the Gospel John places the Temple-cleansing episode, in which Jesus' Temple saying is recorded, within a framework which John is replacing the old with a newly founded temple with a new spiritual temple centered in Christ? The basis of this new temple is in God's own presence. The lack of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:9). The saying of this saying, because clear to Jesus' words to the Sanhedrin about that "the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will rise" (John 5:28-29). In the testimony of the Temple Jesus shows that the new temple is...

CHAPTER III

CHRIST AS ΝΑΟΣ

We have noted above that $\nu\alpha\acute{o}\varsigma$ is used figuratively for Jesus, especially in John 2:19 where Jesus' saying is recorded, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This saying is echoed in the testimony of the false witnesses at Jesus' trial (Matt. 26:61; Mark 14:58), in the railing of bystanders at the crucifixion of Jesus (Matt. 27:40; Mark 15:29), in the charge against Stephen (Acts 6:13 f.), and perhaps indirectly in the preaching of Stephen (Acts 7:48) and of Paul (Acts 17:24).

In his Gospel John places the temple-cleansing episode, in which Jesus' temple saying is recorded, within a framework showing that Jesus is replacing the old cultic worship centered in the temple with a new spiritual worship centered in Himself.¹ The basis of this new worship is in God's own sacrifice, "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The nature of this worship becomes clear in Jesus' words to the Samaritan woman that "the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth" (John 4:23). In the cleansing of the temple Jesus shows that this new worship

¹A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1930), p. 124.

will come about when by His own death and resurrection the old cultus is obviated and a new place for the presence of God with His people is created. "In place of the Jewish Temple worship comes that worship in which the crucified and risen one assumes the central place which the Temple holds in Jewish worship."²

It is not necessary to discuss in any detail the problems connected with the fact that the position of the temple-cleansing narrative in John is different from that of the synoptics. In the synoptic gospels the incident belongs to the Passion narrative (Mark 11:15 ff.; Matt 21:12 ff.; Luke 19:45 ff.), while in the fourth Gospel it belongs to the opening of Jesus' ministry. In form and content all four accounts contain essentially the same material. The didactic purpose is in each case the same, namely, to make clear what set off Jesus from the contemporary priesthood and embittered them against Him.³ However, John introduces a new and significant factor in the statement that Jesus spoke of His own body as the temple, and it is this particularly which clarifies for us the meaning of the temple incident.

²Oscar Cullmann, Early Christian Worship, translated by A. Stewart Todd and James B. Torrance (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1953), p. 73.

³A. Schlatter, Erlaeuterungen zum Neuen Testament (Calw und Stuttgart: Verlag der Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1918), I, 626.

It is important to note that in the temple-cleansing Jesus appears in His Messianic role.

The action is not merely that of a Jewish reformer; it is a sign of the advent of the Messiah; it is not merely a protest against the irreverence and corruption of Jewish worship: it is a sign that the end of animal sacrifice is at hand (see v.21).⁴

Also when He substitutes the phrase "the house of my Father" for the familiar "the house of God," Jesus makes an unmistakable claim for Himself as Messiah, the Son of God.⁵ He later affirms this claim in His conversation with the Samaritan woman, the context of which is significant for this discussion. The Samaritans had rejected Jerusalem and looked to Mt. Gerizim as their place of worship. When the woman thought she recognized in Jesus a prophet, she asked Him concerning the right place to worship. Jesus' reply was to say that neither Jerusalem nor Mt. Gerizim was a fit place to worship God, despite the fact that "salvation is from the Jews." For "the hour is coming, and now is [i.e., since Messiah is here], when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him" (v. 23).

The Messianic character of Jesus' act acquires depth

⁴Edwyn C. Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, edited by Francis Noel Davey (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1947), p. 194.

⁵J. H. Bernard, Gospel According to St. John, edited by A. H. McNeile, in The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), XXIX, 91.

from Old Testament background. It had long been the prophets' task to reject the sacrifice as an opus operatum, and to keep it as a symbol of repentance (Is. 1:11 ff.; Jer. 7:21 ff.; Hosea 5:6 f.; 8:13 f.; Amos 4:4 f.; Mal. 1:6 ff.). Malachi also represents the Lord as suddenly coming to His temple, to purify the sons of Levi so that they present right offerings to the Lord (3:1-3).

Moreover, the replacement of the temple by a new in the Messianic age was expected according to prophecy. Ezekiel describes in glorious detail the temple of the Messianic age (40-48). Isaiah sets forth the glory of the suffering servant in terms of a temple building (64:11 f.) and proclaims the might and majesty of the future Zion (60:1 ff.; cf. Hag. 2:7 ff. and Zech. 2:6 ff.). Also the idea of a new Jerusalem coming down from heaven was a familiar one in Jewish apocalypses (e.g., Enoch 90:28 f.; cf. 4 Ezra 7:26; 13:36; Apoc. Bar. 32:2; also Rev. 21:2,10).⁶

Hence it is not surprising that the "Jews," undoubtedly the temple officials, do not react to Jesus' action with force but rather ask for a sign of His authority. His clearing of the temple in such an authoritative manner, accompanied by His reference to "my Father's house," would suggest at least a prophetic, if not a Messianic, act. Of course,

⁶R. H. Charles, The Book of Enoch (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1912), p. 214.

it is also true that the reserve of the temple officials could have been prompted by the presence of the populace, with whom the whole temple traffic was unpopular, as well as by the sting of their own consciences.⁷

The demand for a sign from Jesus is not peculiar to this incident. Other instances are recorded in John 6:30 and in Matt. 12:38-40 (with parallels in Mark and Luke). Jesus' answer in John 2:19 is "analogous to Matt. xii.38-40 . . . , where the resurrection and its type, the rescue of Jonah from the belly of the whale, are the all-sufficient signs of the authority of Jesus."⁸

The "sign" which Jesus gave, although it was not recognized by the Jews who demanded it, actually did give the basis for His authority in clearing out the temple. In saying "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," He stated that He Himself, as Messiah, was replacing the temple cultus; that is, when the Jews destroyed the temple of Jesus' body, they would simultaneously be destroying the temple of stone as the place of God's presence with His people, and Christ by His resurrection would raise up a new structure as the abode of God on earth.

This interpretation of Jesus' saying seems demanded by

⁷Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), I, 372.

⁸Hoskyns, op. cit., p. 195.

the words themselves, their context, and their ultimate fulfillment. First, looking at the word "temple" for its literal meaning, the context seems to require reference to the actual temple: this is what would be expected in view of Jesus' reference to "my Father's house," in v. 16, and this is how the Jews understood Him, as is seen in their comment on how long it had taken to build the temple. And with "destroy this temple,"⁹ Jesus could only mean that the Jews would really do it, although against their will and not realizing the import of their doing.¹⁰

But that Jesus meant more than the temple of stone before Him is evident in the explanation of the Evangelist in v. 21, "But he spoke of the temple of his body." Thus we have in Jesus' words a reference to the temple, and in John's explanation a reference to Jesus' body. The point of connection is in the concept of *ναός* as the place of God's presence. In defining "temple" as a reference to Jesus' body, the Evangelist was saying that the historical form of Jesus, His very Self, is the place of the presence of God.

⁹The imperative *λύσατε*, "destroy," does not express a command in the usual sense, but rather a concession. It equals *ἐάν καὶ λύσατε*, "though you destroy." Cf. Friedrich Blass, Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch, durchgesehen von Albert Debrunner (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1949), p. 170.

¹⁰Theodor Zahn, Das Evangelium des Johannes, in Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, herausgegeben von Theodor Zahn (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1908), IV, 170.

Ultimately this is only another expression for this, that in Him the Word became flesh.¹¹

That the presence of God was in the historical form of Jesus is directly asserted by Jesus Himself and by the fourth Evangelist. In his prologue John states that the Word which was from the beginning, which from the beginning was with God and was God, that Word "became flesh and dwelt [tabernacled] among us, full of grace and truth" (1:14). John the Baptist describes Jesus as the abiding place of the Spirit (1:33; cf. 7:38). And Jesus Himself testifies "that the Father is in me and I am in the Father" (10:38; cf. 14:10 f., 20; 17:21).

Although Jesus claimed the presence of God in Himself, He never slighted the temple. He spoke of the temple as "my Father's house," and berated the Jews for making of it a "house of trade" and a "den of robbers." He denounced the Jews for being more concerned with arbitrary rules on swearing by the temple than with its significance as the place where God dwells (Matt. 23:16 ff.).

Yet Jesus places Himself over against and above the temple when He says, "Something greater than the temple is here" (Matt. 12:6; cf. v. 41, 42). In the context of this saying the Pharisees had charged Jesus' disciples with

¹¹Hermann Strathmann, Das Evangelium nach Johannes, in Das Neue Testament Deutsch, edited by Paul Althaus (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1951), IV, 63.

violating the Sabbath law by plucking grain in the fields. In His reply Jesus cited the instance of David having entered the temple and having eaten the "bread of the presence," and the fact that the priests profane the Sabbath by the nature of their task and so are guiltless. He was saying that the service of His disciples was higher than that of the priests. In saying "something greater than the temple is here" He was speaking, however, not of the disciples' work, but of Himself and of His own relation to God and to the people of God. "In Jesus ist Gottes Gegenwart in hoeherer Weise vorhanden als in Tempel."¹²

Thus with "destroy this temple" Jesus meant, first, the temple which was the Jewish center of worship, but also, in the second place, the temple defined as His body, in which God dwelled. And His meaning was that when they killed His body they would thereby destroy their already long profaned temple.¹³

The key words in the saying readily lend themselves to the double meaning which Jesus gives them. $\lambda\upsilon\omega$ is used of the destruction of buildings (1 Esdras 1:55; Josephus B. J. 6:32), and also, at least in classical Greek poetry, of

¹²A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Matthaeus (Stuttgart: Calver Verlag, 1948), p. 396.

¹³Zahn, op. cit., p. 171.

the dissolution of human life (Euripides, Iph. Taur. 629).¹⁴ Ναός is used of the sanctuary within a temple enclosure (see Chapter II), and also of the human body as the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16 (see Chapter III).

If Jesus and His own body are thus the ultimate object of "destroy," then correspondingly He must be the object of ἔγειρω, "raise." Also here the word allows for more than one meaning and suits this profound and suggestive saying. ἔγειρω is used of building a city, house, or temple, or of setting up an altar (Deut. 18:22; 1 Esdras 5:43 LXX, Josephus Ant. 6:123, 8:95), and in New Testament language of the resurrection of Christ (Mark 5:41; 14:28; Acts 4:10; 2 Cor. 1:9).¹⁵

So Jesus must certainly be speaking of the resurrection of His body, as is also indicated by His use of the phrase "in three days." While "three days" could mean a very short time, more specifically it was used to indicate the time within which the decomposition of the body after death was not yet visible in a pronounced way.¹⁶ So it is most natural to bring the "three days" of the temple saying into connection with those passages in which Jesus speaks of His

¹⁴Hoskyns, op. cit., p. 195.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes, p. 79.

death being followed by His resurrection on the third day, e.g., Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34 (with par. in Matt. and Luke).

Jesus means, then, that by His resurrection there will come about a new temple. This fills out the meaning of His temple-saying, of His "sign." Just as the destruction of the temple of stones is implicit in His death, so the erection of a new temple is implicit in His resurrection. This new temple is Jesus Himself, who becomes a glorious and indestructible temple, a point where the true worshippers of God would gather.¹⁷

This saying of Jesus with its prophetic meaning was subsequently realized in historic fact. The temple was destroyed spiritually when, as Jesus "yielded up his spirit" on the cross, the curtain of the temple sanctuary was torn from top to bottom (Matt. 27:50 f.). Within forty years it was destroyed materially under the mighty arm of the Roman army, even as Jesus had foretold (Matt. 24:2; cf. Luke 19:43 f.). In the meantime Jesus has raised up a new spiritual temple, formed by the true worshippers gathered into the temple of His resurrected body.

The temple saying of Jesus becomes important later when it is used by the false witnesses against Him in the trial before Caiaphas, the high priest (Mark 14:53 ff.; Matt. 26:57 ff.). The form in which it is given in Mark 14:58

¹⁷Zahn, op. cit., p. 171.

supplements the interpretation given above of the account in John 2, and helps link the temple saying to the spiritual temple concept which extends through much of the New Testament.

The temple saying as reported by the false witnesses in the account of Mark introduces some new elements: "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands'" (Mark 14:58). The differences are immediately evident. Added are "made with hands," *χειροποίητον*, and "not made with hands," *ἀχειροποίητον*; "destroy," *λύσατε*, has become "I will destroy," *καταλύσω*; "I will raise," *ἐγερῶ*, has become "I will build," *οἰκοδομήσω*.

The question immediately arises: since this is reported from the mouths of false witnesses, whose testimony did not even agree (Mark 14:59), should it be regarded as stemming from a genuine saying? If so, what part is "false?" Or is Mark adding later the sense afterward attached to the saying of Jesus? This last can be answered by saying that "this is not after Mark's manner; when he repeats a saying in a longer form, there is reason to regard the longer form as original."¹⁸

The similarity of this saying to that reported by John,

¹⁸Henry B. Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark (London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1909), p. 357.

despite some striking differences, suggests that the account of the false witnesses is based on the temple saying of John 2:19 or a similar saying. The introduction of χειροποίητος is not particularly strange, as the word is commonly used in the LXX. However, the negative, ἀχειροποίητος, is said by Grimm to exist neither in profane authors nor in the LXX. Its appearance therefore in Mark and Paul (2 Cor. 5:1; Col. 2:11) is support for the inference that a genuine saying about a "house not made with hands" underlies the perversion of Mark 14:58.¹⁹ Hence it would seem that the false part of the witnesses' report consisted in changing the verb from second person to first, from the imperative "Destroy" to the indicative "I will destroy";²⁰ and that the remainder can be assumed to represent a genuine saying of Jesus.

The significance of this passage, as distinct from John 2:19, lies in the antithesis of χειροποίητος and ἀχειροποίητος. The word χειροποίητος is much more frequent than the negative, and comes not only from

¹⁹James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949), p. 99.

²⁰The change of the verb from λύω to καταλύω is not particularly significant. Also, if we assume that a saying separate from John 2:19 underlies the saying of Mark 14:58, the appearance of οἰκοδομήσω rather than ἐγερῶ is in no way surprising (see Chapter III, on the discussion of οἰκοδομέω).

Judaism and Christianity but is found also in connection with the pagan dualism of divine and human (e.g., Cicero, De Naturo Deorum, 1, 8.20).²¹ In the LXX it is used exclusively of idols (e.g., Lev. 26:1; Is. 2:18), false gods (Is. 21:9) or images (Lev. 26:30), except in one instance (Is. 16:12), where it is applied to the sanctuary of an idol. With this association of the word its use as found in the New Testament would sound much more derogatory to Jewish ears than it does to our own.²²

The negative ἀχειροποίητος occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in 2 Cor. 5:1, in reference to the spiritual resurrection body, and in Col. 2:11 (cf. Eph. 2:11), in reference to spiritual circumcision. Χειροποίητος with the negative occurs in Acts 17:24 (cf. 7:48) and Heb. 9:11,24.

The saying of Jesus, then, reflected in Mark 14:58 sets in contrast the transitory nature of the temple of stones with the eternal character of the spiritual temple brought about by His resurrection. The temple is transitory because it is the work of men; it is χειροποίητος ,

²¹Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury, The Acts of the Apostles, Part I of The Beginnings of Christianity, edited by F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1933), IV, 215.

²²J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon (London: MacMillan and Co., 1875), p. 249.

and thus unsuitable to be the permanent and ultimate abode of God. The eternal temple is God's own work, it is ἀχειροποίητος. Thus Jesus' saying showed that His mission would destroy the existing temple and simultaneously build the eternal, and this He would fulfill on the third day.²³

A curious point is the great interest taken by the Jews in this saying of Jesus. First they distorted the saying in charging Him before Calaphas. Then they used it in railing at Him on the cross: "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" (Mark 13:29 f.; par. in Matt. 27:39 f.). Again, they set up false witnesses to charge Stephen with saying that Jesus would destroy the temple and change the customs delivered by Moses (Acts 6:13 f.). The explanation for this great concern might be found in the fact that on the surface of it this saying was blasphemous. But it is undoubtedly also true that the saying so rankled in the Jews' minds because it threatened the existence of the temple and so also of their vested interests and way of life.

The "temple made without hands" of the gospels is linked theologically and linguistically with Acts 7:48 ff., where Stephen makes his defense before the council of the Jews.

²³A. Schlatter, Markus Der Evangelist fuer die Griechen (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1935), p. 264.

As noted before, it was the charge of going against the temple and the law that brought Stephen before the council. In his defense, Stephen traces the history of God's covenant people, climaxing with evidence that God does not confine Himself to a place, even to the temple. He pointed out that from Joshua to David the people of Israel used the Tabernacle, not a temple.²⁴ Even David, who found special favor in the sight of God, was denied the wish to build a temple, and in his final prayer (1 Chron. 29:10 ff.), testified that the Lord is not bound to a place. Thus also Solomon, the builder of the temple, in his dedicatory prayer, "But will God dwell indeed with man on earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!" (2 Chron. 6:18). Finally, Stephen asserts that "the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands" and cites Isaiah the prophet: "Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?" (66:1 f.; cf. Jer. 7:2-11).

In using χειροποίητος with its derogatory implication Stephen makes it clear that "in attributing permanent

²⁴"It is significant that in Heb. ix. 1 ff. it is the wilderness tent, not the Jerusalem temple, that is taken as a type of God's spiritual dwelling among His people." F. F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (London: The Tyndale Press, 1951), p. 175.

sanctity to the Temple the Jews were verging on idolatry,"²⁵ and he cites Scripture and their own tradition against the superstitious idea that God would not let the temple fall. Thus the people of Israel, while clinging to the temple of stones, are found to be raging against the spiritual and eternal temple, the temple of Christ "made without hands."

temple of stones as the center of worship for God's people

²⁵Lake and Cadbury, op. cit., p. 81.

This new spiritual temple, as the place of God's presence and the ekklesia for His people, can only be the Church, the community of believers gathered together by the proclamation of Jesus' death and resurrection. Such a community was implied, as we shall see, in the Messianic concept of the Old Testament and subsequently in the words and actions of Jesus. We shall also see that the phrase ἐκκλησία, clearly a metaphor for the community of believers, is a parallel to קהילה. Finally, קהילה is used explicitly for the Church by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 12:14; 2 Cor. 12:14; and Eph. 2:21.

The Spiritual קהילה: a Messianic Act

Before taking up the Messianic concept, we shall consider the Old Testament picture for the people of God, used also

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH AS ΝΑΟΣ

We have seen above that Jesus spoke of Himself as the "temple." He regarded His death as bringing to an end the temple of stones as the center of worship for God's people and His resurrection as the impetus for the founding of a new center of worship in Himself. He was to raise up a new temple "made without hands" in which the worship should be "in spirit and in truth."

This new spiritual temple, as the place of God's presence and the Sammelpunkt for His people, can only be the Church, the community of believers gathered together by the proclamation of Jesus' death and resurrection. Such a community was implied, as we shall see, in the Messiah concept of the Old Testament and subsequently in the words and actions of Jesus. We shall also see that the phrase οἶκος τοῦ Θεοῦ, clearly a metaphor for the community of believers, is a parallel to ναός. Finally, ναός is used explicitly for the Church by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16; and Eph. 2:21.

The Spiritual Ναός a Messianic Act

Before taking up the Messiah concept, we shall consider one Old Testament picture for the people of God, used also

by Jesus in contexts indicating His mission as the gatherer of God's community. Jesus addressed His disciples, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The image of the flock goes back to Isaiah 40:11 and, in a more elaborate drawing, Ezekiel 34:12 ff., where the Lord God is pictured as a shepherd who gathers, feeds, shepherds, judges and saves His flock. In Micah 5:4 it is said of the Messiah to come out of Bethlehem that He shall "stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord." (Cf. also Ps. 77:20; 80:1; 100:3; et al.) Also in the Psalms of Solomon the Messianic king is pictured as tending the flock of the Lord (17:45).

"Flock" is also applied to the "remnant" that will be gathered (Micah 2:12). The "remnant" seems to be reflected in Jesus' being "sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24; cf. 10:6). This restriction placed on Jesus' mission in the days of His flesh does not exclude those outside Israel, for He also has "other sheep, that are not of this fold," who will be brought into the one flock (John 10:16; cf. 21:6 ff.).

The designation "flock" elsewhere in the New Testament quite evidently refers to the Church (1 Cor. 9:7; Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2). Jesus calls Himself "the good Shepherd" (John 10:11), and His flock is the band of His followers, the

Church.¹

The formation of a community of believers, the Church, was inherent in the Old Testament concept of the Messiah, subsequently fulfilled by Jesus. While Jesus Himself made no direct public claim to the title of Messiah until the close of His ministry (Mark 14:61 f.), there can be no doubt that He was consciously filling the role of the Messiah. And as the Messiah, He set about gathering and, by His death and resurrection, creating, a Messianic community.

"Messiah" is from the Greek *Μεσσίας*, which is derived through the LXX from the Hebrew participle, *מָשִׁיחַ*, "anointed." In the Old Testament it has for the most part royal associations. And in the Messianic royal passages (Isaiah 9:1 ff.; 11:1 ff.; 16:4 f.; Amos 9:11 f.; Micah 5:1 ff.; Jer. 23:5 f.; Ez. 34:23) the Messianic king is represented as having a people over which to rule and to judge.

More important than the title of Messiah, which Jesus seems to have avoided, is Jesus' interpretation of His Messiahship in terms of two figures from the Old Testament. One is the "Servant of the Lord" from Isaiah and the second the "Son of Man" from Daniel, each of which is a societary²

¹The Church is described in the New Testament by a number of other figures, many of which are discussed in Ethelbert Stauffer's New Testament Theology, translated from the German by John Marsh (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1955), pp. 153 ff.

²Archibald M. Hunter, The Message of the New Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1944), p. 56.

figure, implying a community. The phrase "Son of man" which Jesus took as descriptive of Himself came from the vision of Daniel (7:13). In the same chapter the "Son of man" is interpreted as a symbol or representative of a community, "the people of the saints of the Most High" (7:27). Further, the apocalyptic literature of Judaism makes a connection between the "Son of man," as Messianic deliverer, and the community (e.g., IV Esdras 13:12; Enoch 38:1; 62:6).

"Son of man" becomes Jesus' most characteristic self-designation and in it He makes His most complete self-revelation. With this title Jesus points to Himself as the representative and embodiment of the "saints of the Most High," and He takes on Himself both the suffering and the glory predicted of the "saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:13,25,27).³

The figure of the "Servant of the Lord" originates from the so-called "servant poems" of Isaiah (42:1-7; 49:1-6; 50:4-10; 52:13-53:12; 61:1-3), all of which are dominated by one figure. This "servant," as a minister of Jahweh to His people, goes the way of suffering to bring them back to God.

Jesus explicitly identified Himself with this "Servant of the Lord" at the opening of His ministry when He read

³Martin H. Franzmann, "New Testament Theology," mimeographed class notes (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Print Shop, 1955), p. 56.

from the book of Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:16 ff.; cf. 7:22; 22:37). What is particularly significant for our discussion is that the servant is closely identified with the people of God. He is a covenant to the people and a light to the nations (Is. 42:6) and "becomes through his expiatory suffering the creator of the new people of God,"⁴ the "many" of Isaiah 53:11 f.

We have seen that the Messiah concept as found in the Old Testament and as interpreted by Jesus involved a Messianic community, a people of God. It can also be shown that Jesus' entire proclamation and action presupposed and was aimed at creating such a community, although we can here treat only some salient points.⁵

In his Gospel Mark tells us that "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel'" (1:14 f.). The "kingdom" and the "gospel" both lie at the heart of Jesus' words and works and both imply a people of God.

Throughout the synoptic gospels the burden of Jesus' preaching was that the kingdom of God had come. The "king-

⁴Gloege, Reich Gottes und Kirche, quoted by Hunter, op. cit., p. 57.

⁵A thorough treatment may be found in R. Newton Flew's Jesus and His Church (New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: The Abingdon Press, 1938), pp. 23 ff.

dom" (Greek, βασιλεία ; Hebrew, מְלִכּוּת) is to be interpreted dynamically in the sense of Isaiah 52:7, that God has taken up His reign. The kingdom is not itself the Church, but it implies it. "God's Rule does not operate in the void. . . . It implies a people living under that Rule. It involves the formation of a community. Thus, the ec-
clesia or people of God is the inevitable correlative of the Rule of God."⁶

The content of "the good news of the kingdom of God" is also found in Isaiah and was the portion read by Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18 f.; cf. 7:22).

In saying, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing," Jesus affirms that the reign of God foretold in Isaiah is now being realized in His words and works. And this will mean a gathering of the "poor," the "captives," etc. "In Deutero-Isaiah the preaching of the good news of God's reign is inseparable from the gathering together of the redeemed Israel, and the guidance of His flock by Jahweh."⁷

⁶Hunter, op. cit., p. 55.

⁷Flew, op. cit., p. 83.

The decisive saying for connecting the message of the Messiah with the "reconstituted people of God" is to be found in the words of institution of the Last Supper.⁸

"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (Mark 14:24); "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (1 Cor. 11:25). The meaning was that by His death Jesus was establishing a new covenant and thus calling a new people.

Of particular significance is the use of "covenant." The Greek word for covenant, *διαθήκη*, is quite consistently used in the LXX to translate the Hebrew word, *ברית*. While the fundamental meaning is that of an agreement between two parties, it becomes a unilateral enactment when the *διαθήκη* is between God and man. The use of *διαθήκη* in this context, as a "new covenant in my blood," recalls both the Servant of Isaiah 42:6 f. and the new covenant promised in Jer. 31:31. By His death Jesus as the Suffering Servant established a new covenant with a new People of God.

A final point, which we discuss, showing the connection of Jesus' Messianic task with a community of believers is the fact of His sending out a chosen group of disciples on a mission (Mark 6:7 ff.; Matt. 10:1 ff.; Luke 9:1 ff.; 10:1 ff.). Jesus sent them out "two by two" as His ambassadors: "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives

⁸Ibid., p. 99.

me receives him who sent me" (Matt. 10:40). Their mission charge was to proclaim the kingdom of God (Luke 10:9). Jesus' "ambassadors" went out bringing men the redeeming God whose Rule gathers men into a community. Their mission is to be seen ultimately as one of gathering God's people.⁹

It is significant in this connection that Jesus chose "twelve" for close fellowship with Himself (Mark 3:14). In the choosing of twelve disciples Jesus embarked upon the task of preparing a people of God, for "twelve" represents the tribes of Israel, or is at least an image of the Messianic household.¹⁰ The choosing of the twelve also provides a look backward to the old People of Israel, and simultaneously a look forward to the final form of the Messianic community (cf. Rev. 21:14).¹¹

Thus far we have been pointing up Biblical evidence in general that the Messianic task implied the gathering of a new people of God, which should be the new spiritual temple, the Church. This argument is further undergirded by a

⁹Cf. Hunter, op. cit., p. 64, who implies that this gathering began already before Pentecost.

¹⁰Karl Heinrich Rengstorff, "Δώδεκα," in Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, durchgesehen von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 326.

¹¹A. Schlatter, Die Geschichte des Christus (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1921), p. 322.

"direct parallel"¹² to the temple-saying, found in Jesus' words to Peter in Matt. 16:18: "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it."¹³

While there is no linguistic parallel between Matt. 16:18 and the temple-saying in John 2:19, it was noted above (Chapter III) that the temple-saying as reported at Jesus' trial (Mk. 14:58), which probably represented a genuine saying of Jesus, used the word οἰκοδομήσω, which Jesus also used in Matt. 16:18. The picture of raising a temple (Jn. 2:19) readily suggests the action of "building."

The "building" concept is one which would be familiar to Jewish thinking and readily connected to the gathered people of God. In the LXX οἰκοδομεῖν is used for the Hebrew בָּנָה and in the first place is used literally for building houses, temples, etc. More important for this discussion is its use in connection with Israel as God's people, in the sense of "planting" and prospering His people (e.g.,

¹²Oscar Cullmann, Peter, translated by Floyd V. Filson (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), p. 199.

¹³We can not here enter into discussion on the problem of the genuineness of this passage. A thorough treatment of the problem is found in Oscar Cullmann, op. cit., pp. 184 ff.

Jer. 1:10; 24:6; 31:4).¹⁴ In later Judaism the figure of "building" becomes more common, perhaps through association with the concept "house of Israel."¹⁵ Both "building" and "house" later become common with the writers of the New Testament books in application to the Church (e.g., 1 Tim. 3:5; 1 Pet. 2:5; Eph. 2:22; Heb. 3:2 ff.). Οἰκοδομεῖν is also used in the sense of the Church being built up or edified (Acts 9:31), of members of the Church building up one another (1 Thess. 5:11), and of the Word building up the Church (Acts 20:32).

That which Jesus says He will "build" is the ἐκκλησία. The term ἐκκλησία occurs only once elsewhere in the gospels (Matt. 18:17), but the idea is common throughout (see above). By His use of this term Jesus shows that the edifice which He will build is the Messianic community of believers.

In classical Greek ἐκκλησία is used to designate the gathering of the citizens in Athens. The derivation is from ἔκκληστοι, the assembled citizens who have been summoned by the herald. This naturally suggests that in

¹⁴The word ἀνοικοδομεῖν is often used for the eschatological restoration of the people of Israel (cf. Acts 15:16). Otto Michel, "Οἶκος," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, begründet von Gerhard Kittel, herausgegeben von Gerhard Friedrich (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1954), V, 142.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 139.

the Bible ἐκκλησία would refer to God calling men out of the world,¹⁶ although this derivation is not apparent in Biblical usage.

In the LXX the Hebrew equivalent of ἐκκλησία is almost always קָהָל , and the meaning is simply "gathering." It may denote either the coming together (e.g., Deut. 18:16), or the being together (e.g., 1 Kings 8:65).¹⁷ When ἐκκλησία is connected with the genitive θεοῦ (e.g., Deut. 23:2; 1 Chron. 28:8; Neh. 13:1), it "always designates the people of God with a reference to redemptive history."¹⁸ Thus when Jesus states, "I will build my church," He is saying that as Messiah--we recall that His words are in response to Peter's confession of Him as "Christ"--He will build the people of God.

It can also be shown that the image of the "rock" is connected with the concept of the Messianic community. God Himself is referred to as a "rock" in the Old Testament (e.g., Ps. 18:2; 19:14; Is. 17:10), and especially in the so-called "Song of Moses" (Deut. 32:1-43), where the theme is God's constancy, His faithfulness to His covenant, and

¹⁶Karl Ludwig Schmidt, The Church, translation by J. R. Coates of the article "Ἐκκλησία" in Kittel's Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1950), p. 24.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁸Cullmann, op. cit., p. 187.

His care, protection, and salvation of Israel.

Christ is called "Rock" in several connections. St. Paul identifies Christ as that "supernatural [Greek, Πνευματικῆς] Rock" which followed the people of Israel through the wilderness, and from which they all drank "supernatural drink" (1 Cor. 10:4). A more direct connection between Christ as "Rock" and the community of God's people is found in Mark 12:10 (par. Mt. 21:42; Lk. 20:17). There Jesus applies to Himself the passage from Ps. 118:22: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone," in which the stone refers to Israel.¹⁹ This self-attestation of Jesus as the "head of the corner" is echoed in Acts 4:11 and 1 Pet. 2:7 (cf. Eph. 2:20). But more important for this discussion is that in the Lukan parallel (20:17) Jesus adds the commentary (v. 28), "Every one who falls on that stone will be broken in pieces; but when it falls on any one it will crush him." This saying probably

¹⁹Related is the "cornerstone" passage of Isaiah 28:16: "therefore thus saith the Lord God, 'Behold, I am laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: He who believes will not be in haste.'" This is quoted and applied to Christ in 1 Pet. 2:6. While "cornerstone" (Greek, ἀκρογωνιαίος) is perhaps properly thought of as the "head-stone" or "coping-stone," it appears here to be a stone in the foundation of a building: "here Christ is the corner-stone of that spiritual house which is the Christian Church, just as in 1 Cor. 3:11 he is said to be the foundation of it." N. H. Snaith, "Cornerstone," A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953), p. 53.

has in mind the passage from Daniel 2:34 f., 44 f., in which a stone is interpreted as a kingdom which destroys all kingdoms and then grows into a mountain that fills the whole world. Already in Judaism this stone had been referred to the Messiah.²⁰ And since Jesus identified Himself with the "son of man" of Daniel 7, it is likely that in this instance He has in mind the "rock" of Daniel 2, which as the Messianic kingdom fills the whole world.

If Jesus Himself is the "rock" and the "cornerstone," what is His meaning in saying that He will build His Church on the "rock" which is Peter? Jesus had used the name Peter (Πέτρος, "rock") since the first call to him (John 1:42). The name was to indicate his function.²¹ As Messiah Jesus had a task of "building," in which Peter is to have a part as a foundation stone. As such Peter is addressed as an apostle and as spokesman of the twelve. As Jesus builds His Church, He uses men whom He has chosen. And in the foundation are the apostles as witnesses of His resurrec-

²⁰Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Das Evangelium nach Matthaeus, in Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Oskar Beck, 1922), I, 877.

²¹Cullmann suggests that a play on words is intended, which would be more apparent in Aramaic, in which the words were probably spoken, than in Greek. While in Greek they read: "You are Πέτρος, and on this πέτρα I will build my church," as distinguishing an individualized rock from a mass of live rock, the Aramaic in both cases would appear כִּיפֵּי. Cullmann, op. cit., p. 185.

tion.²²

This interpretation finds some support in Isaiah 51:1-6, where Abraham is represented as a rock from which the people of Israel were hewn. Secondly, this function of the apostles is supported in the New Testament. In Ephesians 2:20, where the same illustration of the building is used as in Matt. 16:18, St. Paul writes that the household of God is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2:19-21).

Οἶκος τοῦ Θεοῦ a Parallel to Ναός

In considering the Church as *ναός* it will be instructive to look at its closest parallel in *οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ*, "house of God." The idea of the community of believers as the "house of God" is closely connected with the community as the "temple of God," and in fact grows out of it, and in the New Testament the two phrases are used as direct parallels.²³

The Greek word *οἶκος* is used in the LXX mostly for the Hebrew *בַּיִת*, meaning "house" (e.g., Gen. 12:1,15), though it can also translate *אֹהֶל*, "tent," or *מִדְבָּר*,

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 215 f.

²³Michel, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

"palace." It can also be used for "family, race," as in Gen. 7:1. (Cf. the phrase "house of Israel," Num. 12:7; Ruth 4:11; Amos 9:11; et al.) Already in the LXX the phrase οἶκος θεοῦ is a fixed form for the sanctuary, translating (e.g., in Gen. 28:17) בְּיַד אֱלֹהֵי יְרֵמֹה, and (Gen. 28:19) בְּיַד אֱלֹהֵי יְרֵמֹה.

Both in the LXX and in the New Testament we find οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ used as a term of honor for the earthly sanctuary of Israel. Jesus used the phrase in Mark 2:26 when referring to the instance of David's eating the bread of the presence (1 Sam. 21:1 ff.). However, Jesus said "my Father's house" in referring to the temple at the time of the cleansing (John 2:19; cf. Luke 2:49), thus both honoring the temple and claiming authority over it. In the parallel account in Mark 11:17 (also Matt. 21:13) Jesus makes reference to Isaiah 56:7 when He says: "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations?'" (On the temple as a house of prayer, cf. Is. 60:7; 1 Kings 8:29.)²⁴

The Christian congregation or community itself is called the "house of God" in Heb. 3:2 ff.; 1 Pet. 4:17; and in 1 Tim. 3:15. Compare also οἶκος πνευματικός, "spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2:5), and οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, "members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19).

²⁴In one instance (John 14:2) Jesus used "my Father's house" in reference to the heavenly home.

Heb. 3:1-6 is a commentary on Num. 12:17 and compares Moses as a true servant in the House of God with Christ who was set over the House of God as a Son. "House of God" is thus used to picture the Old Testament People of God, Israel, and simultaneously the New Testament People of God, the Church. That the writer means the New Testament Church is evident both in the comparison of Moses with Christ and in the assertion, "we are his house" (v. 6).

The identification of οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ with the Church is readily seen in 1 Pet. 4:17, where the writer, in speaking of the "fiery ordeal" which is coming upon Christ's followers, says: "For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God." In 1 Tim. 3:15 St. Paul interprets for his readers the "household of God" as "the church of the living God." In more elaborate building motifs Peter describes his Christian readers as living stones being built into a "spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2:5), and St. Paul tells his readers that they are "fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19).

While there is no absolutely direct parallel of οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ with ναός as the Christian community, or the Church, the language and the ideas are so closely related as to fully substantiate the argument. The nearest parallel is found in Eph. 2:19-21, where the saints are described first as the "household of God" (οἰκεῖται τοῦ θεοῦ) and then as a "holy temple in the Lord" (ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν

κupiω).²⁵ It can be seen that the New Testament writers would readily use both "house" and "temple" for the Church, because Jesus spoke of the "house of Israel" in reference to God's chosen people (Matt. 10:6; 15:24), and also of building a temple "made without hands" (Mark 14:58; John 2:19).

Ναός a Dwelling Place of the Spirit

Thus far in our discussion of the Church as ναός we have found abundant evidence by implication in Jesus' words and actions as well as by linguistic parallel within the Scriptures that the spiritual temple, raised by Christ, is the Church. Now we find the direct application of ναός to the Church in the writings of St. Paul. The passages to be noted especially are 1 Cor. 3:16,17; 2 Cor. 6:16; and Eph. 2:19-21.

Paul, addressing the Corinthian Christians, calls them "God's temple": "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are" (1 Cor. 3:16 f.). Since the temple is the place of God's presence with His people, Paul's meaning is that God is present in the Church, because God's Spirit, "the mediator of God's presence," dwells

²⁵This passage is linked linguistically, by οἰκοδομεῖν, with 1 Cor. 3:10 ff., where St. Paul describes the Corinthian Christians as "God's temple."

there.²⁶

In the previous verses (10 ff.) Paul has compared himself to a "skilled architect" who has laid a foundation, which is Christ Himself. Others build on that foundation, but they are to take care how they build. With the warning, "Do not desecrate the temple," Paul would have awakened the deepest feeling in his Jewish-Christian readers.²⁷ To the Jews the temple was the place where God's glory was constantly present and they condemned its desecration as the worst sacrilege (cf. Acts 21:28; 6:14). Under Mosaic Law the penalty for defiling the sanctuary was either death (Lev. 15:31), or excision from the people (Num. 19:20). Thus the Jews would readily understand the implications of the Church described as the temple where God dwells by His Spirit.

In this same context St. Paul uses the noun οἰκοδομή, "building," as a parallel expression for the Church. While he had been using an agricultural simile (3:5-9), he inserts the phrase "you are . . . God's building" in making the transition to the passage with the metaphor of the architect (3:9). The sense of οἰκοδομή here is that of the

²⁶A. Schlatter, Paulus Der Bote Jesu (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1934), p. 137.

²⁷Ibid., p. 138.

ready building, as a result of the building activity.²⁸ A parallel is found in Eph. 2:21, where it is said that the whole building (οἰκοδομή) is joined together in Christ and grows into a holy temple.

Another use of οἰκοδομή occurs in 2 Cor. 5:1, where it is used to show the corporality of men.²⁹ "For we know that if the earthly tent [ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκηνῶν] we live in is destroyed [καταλυθῆ], we have a building [οἰκοδομήν] from God, a house [οἰκίαν] not made with hands [ἀχειροποίητον], eternal in the heavens." The use of καταλυθῆ, οἰκοδομήν and ἀχειροποίητον strikingly suggest the temple-saying of Christ recorded in Mark 14:58, where each of these words has a counterpart. "The conclusion forces itself upon us that this utterance of our Lord's was present to the Apostle's mind."³⁰

The use of οἰκοδομή in 2 Cor. 5:1 for the individual's "heavenly house" brings to mind the use of ναός in 1 Cor. 6:19 for the Christian's body: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which

²⁸The first meaning of οἰκοδομή is the act of building and is so used by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 14:12; 2 Cor. 12:19, in reference to spiritual building or advancement.

²⁹Michel, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

³⁰Edward Gordon Selwyn, The First Epistle of Peter (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1952), p. 290.

you have from God?" Here St. Paul again turns to the Jewish aversion to the desecration of the temple (cf. 3:16 f.), appealing to his reader to shun immorality because his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. What St. Paul said before of the Church as God's temple (3:16 f.), he now says of the individual member, for there is no property of the Church which is not the property of the individual member.³¹ This is by virtue of the fact that God raised Christ and so made "your bodies . . . members of Christ" (v. 14,15), and "he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him" (v. 17). Again, this development of thought suggests a connection with the temple-saying of Jesus, in which He promised to raise up the temple of His body, to which are joined the members of His body, the Church.³²

St. Paul uses the metaphor of the temple once again in 2 Cor. 6:16 where he stresses the fact that the Church is to be a temple set apart from the paganism around it.

He urges, first, that they themselves are God's temple, and therefore need no other; and secondly, that they are in a position similar to the Chosen People when they were called out of Egypt and Babylon.³³

To support the latter point he uses quotations from the Old

³¹Schlatter, Paulus Der Bote Jesu, p. 205.

³²"The body of Christ" is a common figure for the Church in the writings of St. Paul (cf. Rom. 5:12; Eph. 5:30; et al.).

³³Selwyn, op. cit., p. 288.

Testament.

What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people [Lev. 26:11 f.] . Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord [Is. 52:11] , and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you [Ez. 20:34] , and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters [2 Sam. 7:14, Is. 43:6] , says the Lord Almighty [2 Sam. 7:8] , " 2 Cor. 6:16-18.

With the allusion to Lev. 26:11 f. St. Paul brings to mind the call of Christ to the Corinthian Christians, by which they became God's temple. As "the temple of the living God" (cf. the temple "not made with hands," Mk. 14:58), they could have no intercourse with the idols of the unbelievers. The history of Israel showed that there could be no "agreement" between God's house and idols, e.g., when Manasseh put an image of Ashera in the house of the Lord (2 Kings 21:7; 23:6); and compare the list of abominations in Ex. 18:3-18 for which God inflicted unsparing punishments.

St. Paul's Old Testament quotations in reference to the People of God point up some characteristics of the Church as the temple of God: God's presence; His close relationship to the Church as His own people and as Father to His children; the duty of holiness as separation from the unclean and dedication to the service of God.³⁴

Almost every image associated with *ναός* as the Church

³⁴Ibid., p. 289.

is drawn into the composite picture of Eph. 2:19-22:

So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The Apostle's line of thought from 2:11 on is that the Gentiles are no longer separated from the "commonwealth of Israel" but are now one with it. The covenant of promise, to which the Gentiles were formerly "strangers," has been swallowed up by the New Covenant made by the blood of Christ. Now Jew and Gentile are one, "both have access in one Spirit to the Father" (v. 18).

Now St. Paul summarizes his point with the passage quoted above. The Gentiles now have equal status with the "saints" ("a designation proper to the members of the ancient People of God")³⁵ and are members of God's family, or household (οἰκεῖται). "Household" leads to the image of a building: the Gentiles are part of a structure of which the New Covenant apostles and prophets are the foundation (θεμέλιος),³⁶ and of which Christ Jesus Himself is the

³⁵J. Armitage Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Second edition; London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1909), p. 67.

³⁶The illustration of the foundation is identical in meaning with that of the rock (cf. Matt. 16:18; Rev. 21:19). Cf. Cullmann, op. cit., p. 209.

chief cornerstone (ἀκρογωνιαίου).³⁷ For Christ gives the whole building (οἰκοδομή) unity, in Him the building grows (cf. "living stones," 1 Pet. 2:5) into a holy temple (νῦός), to be the dwelling place of God.

³⁷On another meaning for ἀκρογωνιαῖος, see footnote 19 on page 33.

CHAPTER V

THE ΝΑΟΣ TRANSCENDED

The use of ναός as a figure for the Church appears, at least by implication, also in the Revelation of St. John: the reference to the Christian "victor" as "a pillar in the temple of my God" in 3:12 suggests the temple figure used elsewhere in the New Testament; in 11:1 f. the Seer "measures" the temple, which is the spiritual temple consisting of all the faithful.

Ναός also appears in the Apocalyptic visions as a symbol of God's presence without reference to the Church. In 7:15 the heavenly vision discloses the saints "before the throne of God" where they "serve him day and night within his temple; and he who sits upon the throne will shelter them with his presence." The picture is that of a great worshipping congregation, serving God in His temple without any priestly intercession, and receiving the sheltering protection of His presence.¹

A heavenly temple representing the place of God's dwelling appears in several instances. In 11:19 "God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen with-

¹Henry Barclay Swete, The Apocalypse of St. John (Second edition; London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1907), p. 104.

in his temple." In 14:15,17 God's angels come forth with the command to the reapers to gather in the harvest, and angels bearing the plagues of judgment come forth in 15:5 ff. A loud voice speaks "from the temple" in 16:1, and announces: "It is done!" (16:17).

As we noted above, *ναός* in 3:12 recalls its use as an image for the Church: "He who conquers I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God; never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name." "Pillar" (*στύλος*) is found elsewhere in the New Testament in relation to the Church. In Gal. 2:9 St. Paul says that James, Cephas and John were "reputed to be pillars"; and in 1 Tim. 3:15 the Church is called "the pillar and bulwark of the truth." (Cf. also Prov. 9:1 and Is. 22:23.) Here "pillar" expresses the unshakeable communion which the victorious saints will have with God. The inscription of the names further suggests that they are God's and Christ's own and hold citizenship in the City of God.²

The measuring of the temple by the Seer in 11:1,2 probably goes back to Ezekiel 40:3 ff. While in Ezekiel the

²Johannes Behm, Die Offenbarung des Johannes, in Das Neue Testament Deutsch, herausgegeben von Paul Althaus und Johannes Behm (5. verbesserte und erweiterte Auflage; Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1949), XI, 26.

purpose of the measuring was to show the prophet the exact measurements of the future temple, here the purpose is to determine the extent of God's sanctuary and its boundary over against the world. Hence the "temple of God" here is to be understood as the People of God; "those who worship there" are the members of the Church.

But for the New Testament's last word concerning the communion of God with His people, "temple" no longer suffices. In the final vision of the Seer he has a view into the New Jerusalem, in which the temple has been transcended. "And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb" (21:22). This is part of his vision of "a new heaven and a new earth" (cf. Is. 65:17) in which there was "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God" (cf. Enoch 90:28 f.). And from the throne comes a great voice saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them" (21:3). The last sentence strongly reflects the recurring phrase of Old Testament prophecy, "I will be their God and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 37:27; Zech. 8:8; cf. 2 Cor. 6:16).

He Who before had been unapproachable (Exodus 33:21; 1 Tim. 6:16) is now visible to the eyes of His people. The certainty of God's presence, which the tabernacle and the temple gave the People of God only in a shadowy and transient

symbol, now becomes perfect and immortal reality in the New Jerusalem.³

There is no need for a temple in the heavenly Jerusalem. God is perfectly present to His People. The heavenly sanctuary is not something outside God; it is God Himself and the Lamb. The Lamb is He Who, in His incarnation, became the dwelling place of God on earth and in His death and resurrection created a temple of living stones, the Church, which is the place of God's presence to men until the Lamb comes again to open to the saints the New Jerusalem in which there is no temple but God.

³Ibid., p. 108.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

To the Old Testament People the temple stood in Jerusalem as a sign of God's presence in their midst. But a sign is designed to stand only until it is fulfilled. Jesus, God dwelling in the flesh, came to the temple in Jerusalem and said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." By this He meant that the sacrifice of His life would obviate the cultus centered in the temple, and that His resurrection from the dead would bring about a new worship centered in Himself. He would be the point of gathering for the true worshippers of God, who would constitute a spiritual temple, the place where God is present to His People. That the Messiah should gather such a community of believers was implied both in the Messianic expectation and in the whole range of Jesus' proclamation. This community of believers, the Church, is called "God's temple" and "a holy temple in the Lord" by St. Paul. But even the Church as God's temple was not intended to be the permanent place of God's presence to His People. St. John tells us in his apocalyptic vision of the New Jerusalem that there he saw no temple, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple.

The figure of the temple for the Church conveys much

to our understanding of the Church. The figure shows, first of all, that the Church is the point of gathering of God's people and the place where God is present to His People. As such, it is God's own; it is His House; it is holy and set apart to His service. It came into being by the sacrifice of the Lamb, and it will serve His purpose until in the New Jerusalem the Lamb Himself is perfectly present to His People.

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