

## These Verses Could Not Contain...

### John 8:48-59

The title of the sermon comes from John 21:25 - *Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.*

What part of this text do we emphasize?

- 1 – Christ seeking the Father’s glory as a model for us
- 2 – Jesus enduring John 1:11 - *He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him*
- 3 – Jesus’s claim that we will never die
- 4 – Christ and Abraham
- 5 – Jesus’s statement, ‘I am.’

All I know to do is go verse by verse and stop when the time runs out.

<sup>48</sup> *The Jews answered him, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?”* <sup>49</sup> *Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me.* <sup>50</sup> *Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge.* <sup>51</sup> *Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”* <sup>52</sup> *The Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, ‘If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.’”* <sup>53</sup> *Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?”* <sup>54</sup> *Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’”* <sup>55</sup> *But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word.* <sup>56</sup> *Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.”* <sup>57</sup> *So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?”*<sup>[d]</sup> <sup>58</sup> *Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”* <sup>59</sup> *So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.*

### First: The Context – Jesus and the Temple

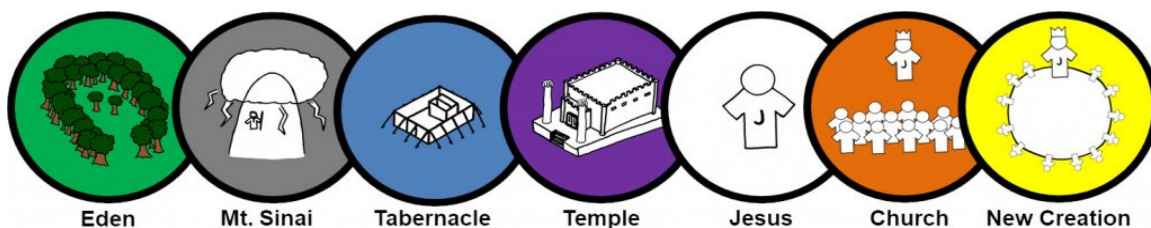
Since 8:1, Jesus has been ministering in the Temple. That in itself is a subject beyond all discovery.

- a) Eden was a Tabernacle with a garden in it

See: <https://reformedforum.org/summarizing-biblical-theological-case-eden-temple-garden/>

- b) Adam and Eve were thrust East out of Eden but that was not the end of our relationship to God.

- c) The Tabernacle, the most perfect inanimate type of Christ in the OT, possessed Edenic overtures and had its only entrance facing East, encouraging us to could return
- d) In the NT, Jesus claims to be the new Temple – John 2:19
- e) Paul calls us the temple of God – 1 Cor 3:16
- f) There is no Temple in the New Jerusalem because Jesus is the Temple
- g) There is the way to view the Bible as the story of God’s Temples on earth



IMP website: <http://stretchtheology.com/the-theology-of-the-tabernacle/>

### Second: Ad Hominem Jesus. 48-49

*The Jews answered him, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?” Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me.*

“Against the person.”

- a) You are a Samaritan

**John 6:41-42** - *So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”<sup>42</sup> They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?”*

The Jews are trying to slander Jesus and separate him from his Jewish followers?

- a) You are a demon

**Mark 3:22-30** - *And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.”<sup>23</sup> And he called them to him and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan?<sup>24</sup> If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.<sup>25</sup> And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.<sup>26</sup> And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.<sup>27</sup> But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.<sup>28</sup> “Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter,<sup>29</sup> but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” —<sup>30</sup> for they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”*

### Third: Jesus & the Glory of God. 50-51 & 54-55

*Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge. <sup>51</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.” & Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’<sup>55</sup> But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word.*

*John 17:6 - I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.*

*Manifest = display or show*

*John 14:8-9a - Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.*

ILL – I read an illustration the other day of how a window reveals two worlds – one inside and one outside, depending on where you are standing. Jesus does this also. He revealed the truth about two worlds; the fallenness of this world and the wonder of the world to come. He revealed it in the Gospels and the epistle writers further explained it.

*Glory = doxa = weight*

Each day, each moment, each action, each attitude, each decision. The goal of life is to conform all of it to God’s glory.

### Fourth: We Will Never Die. 51-53

*Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”<sup>52</sup> The Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, ‘if anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.’<sup>53</sup> Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?”*

Whoa? Wait? Jesus attended funerals. He raised people from the dead. What does he mean when he says, we will never die?

Biblically speaking, what is death?

*Genesis 2:17 - but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”*

Adam and Eve did not die when they disobeyed God. Or did they?

Revelation 20:14 - *Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.*

We are born spiritually dead, then alive. Adam and Eve were born spiritually alive and then died.

Revelation 20:6 - *Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power,*

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** - *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. <sup>15</sup> For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore encourage one another with these words.*

*Ain't No Grave, Gonna Hold My Body Down*

There is a temporary sleep.  
There is an eternal death.

Why does the Bible compare death to sleep?

The metaphor is used to refer to the deaths of:

- The girl who died and was raised back to life (Mt 9:24, Mk 5:39, Lk. 8:52)
- Lazarus (Jn. 11:11-14)
- Some godly people who died in Old Testament times (Mt. 27:52)
- Stephen (Acts 7:60)
- David (Acts 13:36)
- Christians (1 Cor. 15:6, 18; 1 Th. 4:13-15)
- People who died in Old Testament times (1 Cor. 15:20)
- Jewish ancestors (2 Pt. 3:4)

We don't believe in soul sleep.

**1 Peter 3:18** - *For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God*

*Luke 23:42-43 - And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." <sup>43</sup> And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."*

*Luke 16:19-22-23a - The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, <sup>23</sup> and in Hades,*

So why does the Bible refer to death as sleep?

- a) It is temporary
- b) It has its awakening
- c) It is restorative

For the unbeliever, death is destructive. For the Christian, it is a doorway.

#### **Fifth: Abraham's 'I am.' 56-58**

*Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad." <sup>57</sup> So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" <sup>58</sup> Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."*

Why does this claim make the Jews so angry?

Jesus has already presented himself as the new Moses, teaching and feeding his people on the mount. That is a sufficient insult. But now he presents himself as the God of Moses.

*Exodus 3:14 - God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"*

- a) Hebrew = *Ehye aser eye = I am, I was, I will be*
  - b) Greek = *Ego eimi*
- Yahweh/Yah. yhwh, the tetragrammaton because of its four letters, is, strictly speaking, the only proper name for God.
  - It is also the most frequent name, occurring in the Old Testament 6, 828 times (almost 700 times in the Psalms alone).
  - Yah is a shortened form that appears fifty times in the Old Testament, including forty-three occurrences in the Psalms, often in the admonition "hallelu-jah" (lit. praise Jah).
  - English Bibles represent the name yhwh by the title "Lord" (written in capitals to distinguish it from "lord" [adonai]).

See: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/god-names-of.html>

This was not an unusual phrase in Hebrew. People could say, “I am walking” or “I am you Father...”

Jesus uses this phrase in the seven ‘I am’ statements:

- I am the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
- I am the Light of the World (John 8:12)
- I am the Door (John 10:9)
- I am the Good Shepherd (John 10:11,14)
- I am the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
- I am the Way and the Truth and the Life (John 14:6)
- I am the Vine (John 15:1,5)

But when used simply as, ‘I am,’ a stand-alone description, it only means one thing to Jewish minds. It is a claim to be God.

**Revelation 1:8 - “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”**

- Such a statement, if not true, was blasphemy and the punishment prescribed by the Mosaic Law was death (Leviticus 24:11–14).
- There is no doubt that the Jews understood what He was saying because they took up stones to kill Him for making Himself equal with God (John 5:18).
- But Jesus committed no blasphemy; He was and is God, the second Person of the Godhead, equal to the Father in every way.

#### **Sixth: Jesus & the Temple (Again). 59**

*So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.*

In Ezekiel 1, Ezekiel, in Babylonian captivity saw the glory of God

- A chariot with four humans with the faces of four different animals and wings, riding a chariot with burning wheels of various gems, a storm cloud in itself, and a throne above it all. in Babylon, demonstrating that God’s presence was not confined to Jerusalem. God is the God of Israel and Babylon.

**Ezekiel 10:18-20** - *Then the glory of the LORD went out from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim. <sup>19</sup> And the cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth before my eyes as they went out, with the wheels beside them. And they stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the LORD, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them. <sup>20</sup> These were the living creatures that I saw underneath the God of Israel by the Chebar canal; and I knew that they were cherubim. <sup>21</sup> Each had four faces, and each four wings, and*

*underneath their wings the likeness of human hands. <sup>22</sup> And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the same faces whose appearance I had seen by the Chebar canal. Each one of them went straight forward.*

Ezekiel saw God's glory leave the Temple, a prediction of Christ leaving the Temple.

There is a sense here in which:

- a) God left the Temple to build us a Temple, Christ and the New Jerusalem.
- b) God left Jerusalem to be with his people everywhere – Daniel, Ezekiel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Peter's 'elect exiles.'

**Conclusion:** In the next chapter, we will see what that means that God has come to us in Jesus.