

Lesson 30 – “Come to the House of the Lord”

2 Chronicles 29-34

Purpose: To inspire us to receive the promised blessings that come from temple work and scripture study.

My lessons take a different path than the Gospel Doctrine lesson manual. The lesson outline looks closer at the doctrinal topics included in the lesson purpose and scripture block. The lessons are designed to challenge mature, active Latter-Day Saints who have a solid Gospel foundation and are looking for insights into the scriptures that will broaden their faith and understanding.

If you are interested in downloading the Powerpoint file, links to source material or reading posts about improving Gospel Doctrine class preparation, delivery and engagement, you can join my Facebook Group and have full access to the content posted there. The link is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/188904648521022/>

Reopened & Repaired the Temple

- In the first month of his reign, Hezekiah opened the temple doors and repaired them. He brought the Levites together and ordered them to sanctify themselves and the temple and to reinstate the religious ceremonies that had long been neglected.
- Hezekiah brought sacrifices, ordered tithes and offerings upon the people, and the priestly temple service was restored (2 Chronicles 29).

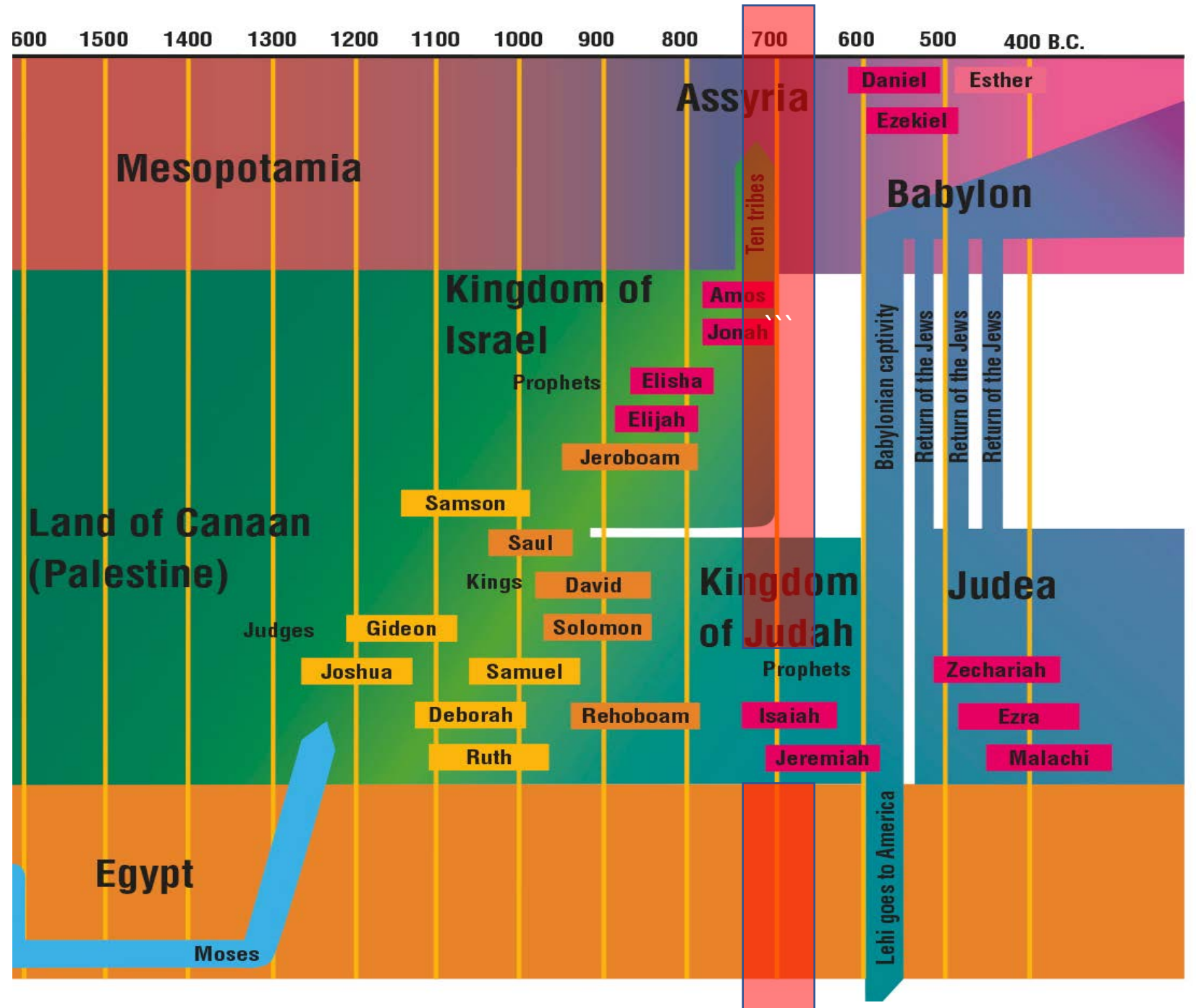


Last Week's Lesson Challenge

Last week's lesson studied the Prophet Elisha and his miracles. It also looked at the transition between Elijah and Elisha, an ancient scriptural example of the "mantle" of Jehovah's prophet being passed on from one to another.

Last week we were to consider that Russell M. Nelson is President and Prophet because he was chosen by Jesus Christ. Does this change your view of his role in promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ and leading the Church on Earth?

King Hezekiah of Judah



Lesson 30, while focused on the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah and the rededication of the Jerusalem Temple, jumps 150 years from the Prophet Elisha to Hezekiah's time. The following outlines the kings and prophets from Rehoboam / Jeroboam (931 BC) to Hezekiah (716 BC).

Kingdom		Start of Reign	Years Since Solomon	Length of Reign	Prophets	
Judah	Israel				Judah	Israel
1. Rehoboam		931 BC	0	17		
	1. Jeroboam	931 BC	0	22		Ahijah
2. Abijah		913 BC	18	3		
3. Asa		911 BC	20	41		
	2. Nadab	910 BC	21	2		
	3. Baasha	909 BC	22	24		Jehu
	4. Elah	886 BC	45	2		
	5. Zimri	885 BC	46	7 days		
	6. Omri	885 BC	46	12		
	7. Ahab	874 BC	57	22		(Elijah)
4. Jehoshaphat		870 BC	61	25		Micaiah
	8. Ahaziah	853 BC	78	2		Elisha
	9. Joram	852 BC	79	12		
5. Jehoram		848 BC	83	8		
6. Ahaziah		841 BC	90	1		
	10. Jehu	841 BC	90	28		
7. Queen Athaliah		841 BC	90	6		
8. Joash		835 BC	96	40	Joel	
	11. Jehoahaz	814 BC	117	17		
	12. Jehoash	798 BC	133	16		
9. Amaziah		796 BC	135	29		Jonah
	13. Jeroboam II	782 BC	149	41		Amos, Hosea
10. Uzziah		767 BC	164	52	Isaiah	
	14. Zechariah	753 BC	178	6 months		
	15. Shallum	752 BC	179	1 month		
	16. Menahem	752 BC	179	10		
	17. Pekahiah	742 BC	189	2		
	18. Pekah	740 BC	191	20		
11. Jotham		740 BC	191	16	Micah	
12. Ahaz		732 BC	199	16		
	19. Hoshea	732 BC	199	9		
722 BC - Fall of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) to Assyria						
13. Hezekiah		716 BC	215	29		
701 BC - Assyria Lays Seige to Jerusalem						

The Jerusalem Temple After Solomon's Reign

David, the second king of Israel, desired and planned to build a house unto the Lord, declaring that it was unfit that he, the king, should dwell in a palace of cedar, while the sanctuary of God was but a tent. But the Lord spake by the mouth of Nathan the prophet, declining the proposed offering, because David, king of Israel, though in many respects a man after God's own heart, had sinned; and his sin had not been forgiven. Soon after Solomon's accession to the throne he set about the labor. He laid the foundation in the fourth year of his reign, and the building was completed within seven years and a half. The erection of the Temple of Solomon was an epoch-making event, not alone in the history of Israel but in that of the world. According to commonly accepted chronology, the temple was finished about 1005 B.C. In architecture and construction, in design and costliness, it is known as one of the most remarkable buildings in history. The dedicatory services lasted seven days—a week of holy rejoicing in Israel. The Lord's gracious acceptance was manifest in the cloud that filled the sacred chambers as the priests withdrew, "for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God".

The glorious preeminence of this splendid structure was of brief duration. Thirty-four years after its dedication, and but five years after the Solomon's death, its decline began and was soon to develop into general spoliation and an actual desecration. Solomon had been led astray by the wiles of idolatrous women, and his wayward ways had fostered iniquity in Israel. The temple soon lost its sanctity, and Jehovah withdrew His protecting presence from the place no longer holy. The Egyptians, from whose bondage the people had been delivered, were again permitted to oppress Israel. Shishak, king of Egypt, captured Jerusalem, "and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord". The work of desecration continued through centuries. Two hundred and sixteen years after the Egyptian spoliation, Ahaz, king of Judah – father of Hezekiah--, removed the altar and the font and left but a house where once had stood a temple.

<https://www.lds.org/temples/history-of-temples?lang=eng>

2 Chronicles 29:1-11

1 Hezekiah began to reign when he was five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah.

2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done.

3 ¶ He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the Lord, and repaired them.

4 And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street,

5 And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place.

6 For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord, and turned their backs.

7 Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense nor offered burnt offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel.

8 Wherefore the wrath of the Lord was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes.

9 For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this.

10 Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.

11 My sons, be not now negligent: for the Lord hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense.

We know little about Hezekiah before he succeeded his father, Ahaz, as King of Judah. Ahaz had been an evil king who had not followed Jehovah as many kings before him had done.

Hezekiah chose to follow Jehovah and immediately set to reintroduce the Levite Priesthood. He had the Levites cleanse Solomon's Temple, which had been sacked and desecrated decades before and reinitiated many of the Jewish holy days including the Passover.

Hezekiah became king after the fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Assyria had been threatening Judah. It is likely that Hezekiah understood that Judah's only salvation from the Assyrians would be Jehovah and he personally dedicated himself to following Jehovah's commandments, asked the Levites to do so and finally asked the people of Judah to do so also.

The Assyrian siege of Jerusalem covered at least half of Hezekiah's reign. Having the foresight to build the Siloam Tunnel, often referred to as Hezekiah's Tunnel, was instrumental in saving Jerusalem during the long siege. The tunnel still exists today.

[2 Chronicles 29:12, 15-19](#)

12 ¶ Then the Levites arose...,

15 And they gathered their brethren, and sanctified themselves, and came, according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the Lord, to cleanse the house of the Lord.

16 And the priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord, to cleanse it, and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the Lord into the court of the house of the Lord. And the Levites took it, to carry it out abroad into the brook Kidron.

17 Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the Lord: so they sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end.

18 Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the Lord, and the altar of burnt offering, with all the vessels thereof, and the shewbread table, with all the vessels thereof.

19 Moreover all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified, and, behold, they are before the altar of the Lord.

[2 Chronicles 29:20-26](#)

20 ¶ Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the Lord.

21 And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he goats, for a sin offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer them on the altar of the Lord.

22 So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and sprinkled it on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar.

23 And they brought forth the he goats for the sin offering before the king and the congregation; and they laid their hands upon them:

24 And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.

25 And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.

26 And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.

[2 Chronicles 29:27-36](#)

27 And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel.

28 And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished.

29 And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped.

30 Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

31 Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the Lord, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the Lord. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free heart burnt offerings.

32 And the number of the burnt offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, and two hundred lambs: all these were for a burnt offering to the Lord.

33 And the consecrated things were six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep.

34 But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt offerings: wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them, till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

35 And also the burnt offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings, and the drink offerings for every burnt offering. So the service of the house of the Lord was set in order.

36 And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.

Hezekiah rededicated Solomon's Temple and encouraged the people of Judah to renew their use of the temple as their ancestors had done before. Soon after, Hezekiah issued a proclamation that the both Kingdoms of Judah and Israel should come to Jerusalem to again celebrate the Passover. The Passover had not been celebrated in recent years because of the apostasy of both the priesthood and the people. In [2 Chronicles 30:1-12](#), we read the following.

1 And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel.

2 For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month.

3 For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

4 And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation.

5 So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written.

6 So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, **Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.**

7 And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see.

8 Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

9 For if ye turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.

10 So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.

11 Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.

12 Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the Lord.

2 Chronicles 30:20-27

20 And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.

21 And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the Lord.

22 And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the Lord God of their fathers.

23 And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days: and they kept other seven days with gladness.

24 For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves.

25 And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.

26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem.

27 ¶ Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.

Hezekiah's devotion to Jehovah and his desire for his people and the people of Israel to repent and come back to living the Laws of Moses, created a renewal of the people in the love and devotion to Jehovah.

Hezekiah's work to cleanse and rededicate Solomon's Temple was an important part of this.

It is no different for us today.

Latter-day Saints are a temple-building and temple-loving people. It has been so from the earliest days of the Church. Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord declared that "my people are always commanded to build [temples] unto my holy name" (D&C 124:39-40). In temples, we can draw closer to the Lord, we can learn more about His plan for our happiness, we can receive essential ordinances for our exaltation, and we can perform vicarious service on behalf of those who have died without the gospel of Jesus Christ.

From the very beginning, there have been sacred places upon the earth where God has communed with His children. They were designated by God and hallowed by His presence as places where He would teach and bless His children. Many of these places are recorded in the scriptures. The Garden of Eden was surely a sacred place where Adam and Eve dwelt in the presence of the Father and the Son and were able to converse with Them directly. After the Fall and their subsequent expulsion from the Garden, Adam built an alter to worship God and offer sacrifices as they were commanded. Their prayers were heard and their lives blessed.

As Moses approached the burning bush on Mount Sinai, the Lord instructed him to "put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground"—sacred ground where the Lord would instruct Him and offer covenants for His people. Centuries later, the Savior would lead Peter, James, and John up the Mount of Transfiguration where they would experience marvelous manifestations and receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven. There they were visited by Moses and Elijah and heard the voice of the Father bearing witness that Jesus is His beloved Son.

<https://www.lds.org/temples/why-latter-day-saints-build-temples?lang=eng>

From the steps of the Salt Lake Temple, President Henry B. Eyring, at that time, First Counselor in the First Presidency, speaks of the way temples remind us of the Savior. “Every part of these buildings, and all that goes on inside them, reflect the love of the Savior for us, and our love for Him,” he says. He bears testimony that the Savior lives and that the priesthood keys related to the temple are entrusted to us by the Savior.

<https://www.lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/temples-reflect-the-saviors-love-for-us?lang=eng>

This Week's Lesson Challenge

The story of Elisha is one of miracles. It is also an ancient scriptural example of the “mantle” of Jehovah’s prophet being passed on from one to another.

When a man is called to be an Apostle, he is also being called to possibly be the President of the Church and Prophet. Jesus Christ determines who will be Prophet by the length of time that an Apostles lives and serves. The living Apostles hold the authority of Jesus Christ to call, ordain and sustain the senior Apostle to be President of the Church and Prophet.

This week consider that Russell M. Nelson is President and Prophet because he was chosen by Jesus Christ. Does this change your view of his role in promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ and leading the Church on Earth?