



into the Melting Pot

the question is more important than the answer

Sunday 19 March 2017

The Bible Jesus Knew – First Temple Theology

Brief notes from Rob Hilton's talk based on Margaret Baker's book An Introduction to Temple Theology.

6th Century BCE was the most important time in the Old Testament as this was when the exiled Jews returned to Jerusalem and the temple (the Second Temple) was rebuilt. The books of Jewish tradition and history were collected together.

In Jesus' time, people followed First Temple theology based on the tabernacle, God with us.

Early Christians believed Jesus was that Temple, and the physical Temple in Jerusalem was the Third Temple.

The Second Temple was informed by Aaron and the Levite priesthood tradition including rules and laws, and sacrifices for sin.

Melchizedek (real or not) existed as an archetype. Jesus riled against the power and control of the Second Temple theology.

Josiah was the architect of the Second Temple and the Old Testament texts were written and compiled within that context, and with that bias.

Ezekiel's visions are of the First Temple. The book of Enoch, excluded from the Old Testament canon, was also First Temple and read by early Christians.

Key bits of the First Temple furniture were removed by Josiah: the jar of manna, Aaron's rod, the flame (representing the 'burning bush'), the ark, the throne, the veil. The veil was to contain holiness, so as not to desecrate it, else all became holy.

Genesis 1, along with Matthew's and Luke's birth stories are theology not history.

The book of Hebrews is First Temple. Three themes:

- **Covenant:** All Old Testament covenants (eg Noah) were everlasting and made no reference to sin. It's about incarnation. All the prophets were First Temple. Compare Matthew 26:26-30 vs Luke 22:14-20 with Mark 14:22-26. It is transforming.
- **Atonement:** 1 Corinthians 8:6 and Psalm 110. How many Gods / Lords? Resurrection is not coming back to life after death but transformation to live now. Cleansing (washed in blood) – NO, this is Second Temple. Making good, making whole, repairing – YES, this is First temple.
- **Wisdom:** Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job etc kept by Jeremiah following the destruction of the first physical temple by the Babylonians in 586BCE.