

The Building of the **TEMPLE**

“Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain” (Psalm 127:1).

Solomon’s Temple



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Through their many sins and continued rebellion, the house of Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians and exiled. One hundred and twenty years later, the house of Judah fell. They had followed the ways of the house of Israel and God sent them into captivity, too.

“This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘**Turn from your evil ways and your evil practices.** But they would not listen or pay attention to me,’ declares the LORD” (Zechariah 1:4).

The temple of Solomon was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC.

“Where are your forefathers now? And the prophets, do they live forever? **But did not my words and my decrees,** which I commanded my servants the prophets, **over take your forefathers?**” (Zechariah 1:4-5).

The word of God transcends time; it is preserved by God himself.

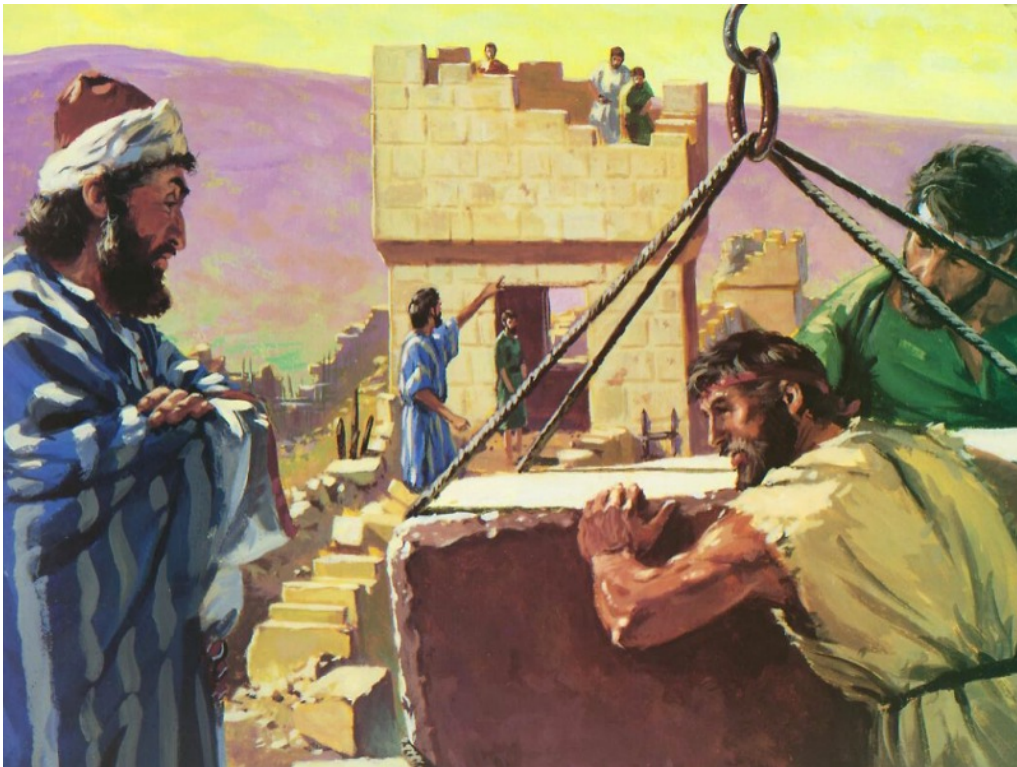
“Then **they repented** and said, ‘The LORD Almighty has done to us what our ways and practices deserve, just as he determined to do’” (Zechariah 1:6).

The house of Judah repented.

“These are the things you are to do: **Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I HATE ALL THIS,**’ declares the LORD” (Zechariah 8:16).

After their release, God encouraged the Jews to return and Cyrus the Great, king of Persia gave the orders for the building of the second temple in Jerusalem.

The Rebuilding of the Temple



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“Who despises the day of small things?” (Zechariah 4:10)

The rebuilding of the temple was met by various obstacles. The work was interrupted many times. The job seemed impossible; the remnant felt discouraged. Through Zechariah, God gave them reassurance of those who accomplish great things, do not despise the small things.

The rebuilding of this temple was achieved through the perpetual overcoming of barriers and set-backs in harsh times that resembled a landscape filled with mighty mountains.

God was aware. “What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a **plain**. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’” (Zechariah 4:7)

The completion of the second temple in Jerusalem was celebrated with joy, but God heard shouts of joy that rang out into the heavens. The struggle of building the second temple mirrors the struggle in building the spiritual temple in this evil age.

God saw into the future at the time of the establishment of His temple that was beyond any imagination. It is the place where He dwells among His people—a **living organism of holy people—a kingdom of royal priests**. The calling given to the kingdom of Israel seemed an impossible feat. All the sacrifices in the world, could not make the people righteous. How could this temple be built?

Worse still, the kingdom of Israel had collapsed. The house of Israel had long gone into captivity. They did not repent for still many years into their second sentence, as wanderers among the nations, for a period seven times their original punishment. The house of Judah repented; but they were a mere remnant of the kingdom left with an arduous task.

The return of the Jews to their homeland was a daunting and humbling time. Foreigners had moved in and imperial powers surrounded them. They were insignificant and weak. Zerubbabel who has lineage from within the house of David was appointed governor of Judah and he began the rebuilding of the temple. The obstacles surfaced immediately. The completion of the foundation took two long years. While the people struggled to rebuild a physical temple, God focused on the spiritual temple, which He revealed to Zechariah would have a beginning in the lineage of David. Zerubbabel was the physical type of the one who would lay the foundation of the spiritual temple and later return to finish it.

This temple, God announced would **not** be achieved by military might or economic power, or **any form of human effort but by God’s Spirit**. God was revealing His plan of salvation to Israel. Payment for their sins would be accepted and God would avail His Holy Spirit. The Israelites, **both houses**, will achieve their calling and become a re-united holy kingdom of royal priests (Exodus 19:6, I Peter 2:9), but not for many years to come, even today, it remains a work in progress. The establishment of that temple will bring great shouts of joy. But first, **the mighty mountain of forces that hinders God’s work needs to be destroyed, so that Jerusalem will become a plain**, a flat land—no opposition, no barriers, no shortage of materials and labour: righteous leadership, God’s Holy Spirit, truth, understanding, wisdom, knowledge, the complete and pure word of God.

“**Who are you, O mighty mountain?** Before Zerubbabel you shall **become a plain**. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of ‘God bless it! God bless it!’” (Zechariah 4:7)

Who—what are you, O mighty mountain? (Zechariah 4:7) The God of Israel has declared your fate.

It is time to do some house cleaning from within and without. “Then he said to me, ‘**This scroll** contains the curse that is going out over the entire land. One side of the scroll says that **those who steal** will be banished from the land; the other side says that **those who swear falsely will be banished** from the land’” (Zechariah 5:3).

“**This is Wickedness!**” And he threw her down into the middle of the ephah and cast the lead weight on its opening” (Zechariah 5:8).

“He replied, ‘**To the country of Babylonia** to build a house for it. When the house is ready, the basket will be set there in its place’” (Zechariah 5:11).

“**OUTSIDE** [of this temple] are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood” (Revelation 22:15).

At the appointed time, the wicked will be gathered from all over the world into one heap that collectively forms a unified body, representing a woman. The female gender pictures mankind: the church true and false. All the unrepentant wicked in Israel will be included in this body. They will join the imperial power that is hostile to God. From their raging hatred against God Almighty, a great battle will erupt at the end of this evil age. O mighty mountain your fate is sealed, but you believe you have a chance.

The beast of Revelation is a heavenly force that will ally with earthly nations. This beast existed on earth previously, not during the time of Apostle John and it will come again. Satan will give power to this collective mighty mountain that obstructs and hinders the building of God’s spiritual temple. History is repeating itself. The thirteen nations of 21st century Israel have wandered from their calling and are today—again, covered with sins.

“**For I know how many are your offenses and how great your sins.** There are **those who oppress the innocent and take bribes and deprive the poor of justice in the courts.** Therefore, **the prudent keep quiet in such times, for the times are evil. I URGE YOU TO HATE EVIL, LOVE GOOD; MAINTAIN JUSTICE IN THE COURTS. Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph** [the West]” (Amos 5:12-15).

Rebellious 21st century Israel will be left unprotected at the appointed time for their depravity, their godlessness, and of those who claim to worship God—their superficial love for God.

“‘Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, the man who is my partner,’ says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies. ‘Strike down the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and **I will turn against the lambs [God’s covenant people]**’” (Zechariah 13:7).

It is judgment time for both houses of Israel.

“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, says the Lord, **two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.** And **I will bring the third part through the fire, and will**

refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: THEY SHALL CALL ON MY NAME, and I will hear them: I will say, it is my people: and they shall say, THE LORD IS MY GOD” (Zechariah 13:8-9).

“In that day the remnant left in Israel, the survivors in the house of Jacob, will no longer depend on allies who seek to destroy them. But THEY WILL FAITHFULLY TRUST THE LORD, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL” (Isaiah 10:20).

One-third of the population of the thirteen tribes of 21st century Israel will call on their God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He will hear them. The battle against the mighty mountain now begins. This final beast has taken over the nations—who can stop it?

“One of the heads of the beast appeared to be fatally wounded. But the mortal wound was healed, and the whole world was astonished and followed the beast. And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?” (Revelation 13:3-4).

God remains loyal to the covenant He made with Israel. **“As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I WILL FREE YOUR PRISONERS** from the waterless pit. Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope; even now I announce that **I WILL RESTORE TWICE AS MUCH TO YOU. I will bend JUDAH as I bend my bow and fill it with EPHRAIM.** I will rouse your sons, Zion, against your sons, O Javan, and **MAKE YOU LIKE A WARRIOR'S SWORD”** (Zechariah 9:12-13).

Israel, both houses: Judah and Ephraim, will cry out to God, so He will **“restore twice as much to you.”** He will not only **rescue them** from the enemy but will **give them victory** over this seemingly invisible force. Judah and Ephraim are bow and arrow in the hand of God.

“Then the LORD will appear over them; his arrow will flash like lightning. The sovereign LORD will sound the trumpet; he will march in the storms of the south, and the LORD Almighty will shield them. They will destroy and overcome with slingstones... The LORD their God will save them on that day as the flock of his people” (Zechariah 9:14-16).

For 21st century Israel, it will have been over 2,500 years before they would **again have their God fight for and with them.** At the close of this evil age, God’s people finally step up to the plate—all thirteen tribes (twelve plus one). The house of Israel was divorced by God hundreds of years ago, due to their insolence. Their brothers in the house of Judah thought they had become unredeemable. In God’s great mercy, He accepted the repentance of the house of Israel and gave them grace. Zechariah confirms this redemption. The Ephraimites [the house of Israel] will fight with the house of Judah in this final battle. Their fight will be so victorious that it will be remembered for generations—their children’s children will be told this awesome story of how the Almighty God again chose His people and through the power of God Almighty, the wicked and raging heavenly and earthly forces were totally destroyed.

“The Ephraimites will become like mighty men, and their hearts will be glad as with wine. Their children will see it and be joyful; their hearts will rejoice in the LORD. I will signal for them and gather them in. Surely **I will redeem them;** they will be as numerous as before. Though I scatter

them among the peoples, **YET IN DISTANT LANDS THEY WILL REMEMBER ME. They and their children will survive, and they will return**" (Zechariah 10:7-9).

Ephraim repents. "I have heard Ephraim grieving, 'You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; **bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the LORD my God**" (Jeremiah 31:18).

God hears their cry and rescues them. "When **the Assyrian invades our land** and marches through our fortresses, **we will raise against him seven shepherds, even eight leaders of men.** They will rule the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod with drawn sword. **He will deliver us from the Assyrian when he invades our land and marches into our borders**" (Micah 5:5-6).

The mighty mountain will be levelled and the spiritual temple of God will be built in Jerusalem on a beautiful vast plain. "In that day the LORD will punish the **POWERS IN THE HEAVENS ABOVE** and the **KINGS ON THE EARTH BELOW.** They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days" (Isaiah 24:21-22).

Shouts will be heard on earth and all through the heavens on that day. He will bring out the capstone to shouts of joy, "God bless it! God bless it!" (Zechariah 4:7)



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