

The Third Temple

Revelation 11:1-2 – March 14, 2021

The site where the Temple mount sits is the same place Abraham 4000 years ago met with a priest of the true God named Melchisedec (Genesis 14, Hebrews 5-7). A few years later, Abraham went to this site to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice, but God provided, a ram for him to offer instead (Genesis 22).

The First Temple:

Approximately 1000 years later, in 988 BC, King David purchased this same site from a local resident named Ornan (1 Chronicles 21.) Twelve years after that, in **975 BC, King Solomon dedicated the First Jewish Temple.**

Prior to that, Israel worshipped in a place known as the Tabernacle (a tent made with badgers' skin). They did this for 470-years.¹ That is, from Moses to King David, Israel worship at the tent known as the Tabernacle. But when the First Temple was completed (1 Kings 5-8) tradition tells us Israel dismantled the Tabernacle and stored it under the Temple Mount.

The First Temple was twice as large as the tabernacle. It was made of immense quarried stone and cedar and many of its items were covered in gold. It stood for approximately 366 years. It was destroyed by the Babylonians on the 9th of Av, 586 BC (The month of Av relates to late July or early August).

Unique aspects of the Tabernacle and Temple.

1. Both the Tabernacle and the Temple were built according a pattern revealed by God.

“For when Moses was about to erect **the tabernacle**, he was instructed by God, saying, ‘See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.’” (Hebrews 8:5).

Likewise, King David said, “All this (*the plans for the **first temple***) . . . the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern” (1 Chronicles 28:19).

¹ 1444 BC to 975 BC

2. Both were blessed with the presence of the *Shechinah* Glory.

The Second Temple – Zerubbabel’s Temple:

The Second Temple was built in 516 BC by the returning Jews from their Babylonian captivity. It was modest in comparison to the 1st Temple, causing those who remembered the 1st Temple to weep. The prophet Haggai reports their reaction in Haggai 2:3.

“Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?”

However, Haggai’s prophecy continues with a promise:

“The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts” (Haggai 2:9).

In this verse, Haggai prophesies that the glory of the Second Temple would come about in some different and greater way.

Unlike the Tabernacle and the First Temple, the Second Temple did not begin with a manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory. But Haggai’s prophecy makes clear that the glory that was once part of the First Temple will come in a greater way to this Second Temple. That is, they would again see the manifestation of God’s presence in the *Shechinah* Glory. The fact that this Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 necessitates the fulfillment of Haggai’s prophecy to be prior to that time.”² That is, Jesus, the Son of God would walk into this Temple.

The Second Temple’s Remodeling by Herod:

Zerubbabel’s Temple was later razed and enlarged by Herod the Great beginning around 20 BC and lasted for **46 years**. The area of the Temple Mount was doubled and surrounded by a retaining wall with gates. The Temple was raised, enlarged, and faced with white stone.

He recruited 10,000 workmen to do this work. In this remodeled 2nd Temple Jesus frequently taught, and on two occasions cast out the money changers.

² Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. *The Footsteps of the Messiah: A Study of the Sequence of Prophetic Events*, Ariel Ministries, San Antonio, TX. pgs. 606-7.

Its end came on the 9th of Av, in 70 AD (*ironically on the identical date that the First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians*) the Romans destroyed the Second Temple.

Hosea had prophesied that a time would come that the 2nd temple would be destroyed, and its sacrifices, offerings, instruction and worship would cease (Hosea 3:4-5).

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: ⁵ Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days” (Hosea 3:4-5).

THERE IS NO JEWISH TEMPLE TODAY:

Nineteen hundred and fifty-one years after the Second Temple was destroyed, **the Jewish people are still without a temple**. Today, there are many speculations as to when the Third Temple would be built, but to date, this has not happened.

Four passages in Scripture speak of a future Temple operating during the tribulation period.

The first is found in Daniel 9:27:

“And he (*the prince of the people, the Antichrist*) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and **in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease**, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

The second passage is Matthew 24:15:

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, **stand in the holy place**, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)”

The third passage is found in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4:

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; ⁴ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that

is called God, or that is worshipped; **so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.**”

The final passage is found in Revelation 11:1-2:

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and **measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.** ² But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.”

All four passages describe events occurring in the Jewish Temple during the middle part of the tribulation.

There are several things we need to note about this Third Temple – The Tribulation Temple.

First, It Is an Unsanctioned Temple with Unsanctioned Worshippers:

There is a passage found in Isaiah 66:1-6 regarding a temple that will be built with a sacrificial system after the Mosaic Law. However, this Temple receives no sanction from God.

“Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: **where is the house that ye build unto me?** and where is the place of my rest? ² For all those things hath mine hand made, and those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. ³ **He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man;** he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. **Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.** ⁴ I also will choose their delusions and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes and chose that in which I delighted not. ⁵ Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name’s sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. ⁶ A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompence to his enemies.”

Isaiah speaks of a house or Temple being built for God which He does not sanction. We know it cannot be the First or the Second Temple, for they were both clearly sanctioned by God. Nor can it be the Temple that will be built in the Millennial Reign. That one will be built by the Messiah, and God certainly sanctions that one. Therefore, it must be the one that appears during the tribulation period.

In this passage, God is appealing to Israel to return to Him in faith, not to merely build Him a house. Isaiah 66:3 declares,

“Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.”

Revelation 11:

It is very interesting to note that in Revelation 11, John is asked to measure a temple that exists during the tribulation period. He is to measure *“the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein”* with a reed.

A reed is a 10’ long measuring device commonly used in construction in those days. We can easily understand the physical measurements made on a building, and an altar, but what does it mean to measure those worshipping therein?

Measure them that worship therein:

Imagine John holding his 10’ reed next to those worshipping at this temple. He would find that everyone was shorter than the reed. The idea here is they are all falling short. For the true Lamb of God had already come. He is the only acceptable sacrifice for their sins. Here **“they . . . chose their own ways, and their soul delighted in their abominations.”** They build a temple to the Lord and were performing an unauthorized form of worship.

Isaiah 66:4 says, “when I spoke, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes and chose that in which I delighted not.”

Second, How Near Are We to The Building of the Third Temple?

The six-day war in 1967 set the stage for the fulfillment of this prophecy. Before the war the Temple compound was under Arab control. That event has made it possible for the rebuilding of the Temple.

Two groups are preparing to rebuild this temple. One is based in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. They are in the process of making the furnishings of the next Temple. The second group is located in the Moslem Quarter of the Old City, and is training Cohens, descendants of the Aaronic line, in how to perform the sacrificial rites.

Cedar from Lebanon captured in the north during the 1982 war has been placed in storage for the next temple and so on. Thus, there has been considerable preparation for the Third Temple. Both the Askenazi and Sephardic Chief Rabbis of Jerusalem agree that such a temple will be built as soon as circumstances permit.

Third: This examines what John is to measure, and not to measure.

“Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. ² **But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not**” (Revelation 11:1-2)

We do not know when this Temple will be built. It is still for some future date. It will be built before or during the Tribulation period. If the latter is true, then its building might be part of the peace treaty (Daniel 9:27).

What John measures the Holy of Holies, the Holy Place and what we think is Brazen the Altar where the sacrifices are offered. If so, the Altar stands outside the building containing the Holy of Holy's and the Holy Place.

It is unclear why Gentile court is not measured. We know from this passage that that area will be defiled during the latter part of the Tribulation. Another possibility is it does not exist. That is, the Gentile Court was not constructed either because of time or space restrictions.

THE DESECRATION OF THE TEMPLE AND CITY

We know that the Tribulation Temple will be desecrated in the middle of the tribulation period. Several passages speak of this.

The Revelation 11:2 passage says,

“**But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.**” (3½ years).

Daniel confirms this in Daniel 9:27

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: **and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease . . .**” (Daniel 9:27).

This passage continues in Daniel 9:27b,

“**And for the overspreading of abominations**”

A literal translation of this passage reads,

“**Upon the wings of the abominations . . .** he (the Antichrist) shall make it (the Temple) desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

Here we learn that the sacrifices being offered will be ended and some sort of continual abomination will take place within the temple area.

Daniel 12:11 adds to this by saying,

“And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, **there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.**”

According to this statement the Abomination of Desolation will last 1,290-days. That is a full 30-days longer than the three and one half years. Either it will begin 30-days before the exact midpoint of the tribulation or more likely go beyond the end of the Tribulation by 30 more days.

Based on Daniel 12:12 we learn,

“Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days” (1335 days or 75 days beyond the tribulation.)

Some suggest that the extra 30-days are required for cleansing of the earth after the tribulation ends, then another 45-days are required to reorder things for the Millennial age to begin.

FLEEING THE LAND

Matthew 24:15-16 indicates that the desolation will be a sign to Israel to flee the land. It says,

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) ¹⁶ Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains”

THE DESOLATION HAS TWO PART TO IT

The desolation seems to involve **someone sitting in the temple** declaring himself to be God and later **some other object is placed in the temple** (like an image or idol).

First, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 speaks about the Antichrist who sits in the temple declaring Himself to be God.

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, **the son of perdition;** ⁴ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; **so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.**”

Second, in Revelation 13:11-15 we are told that the False Prophet sets up an image in the Temple

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. ¹² And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. ¹³ And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, ¹⁴ And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; **saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast,** which had the wound by a sword, and did live. ¹⁵ **And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak,** and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”