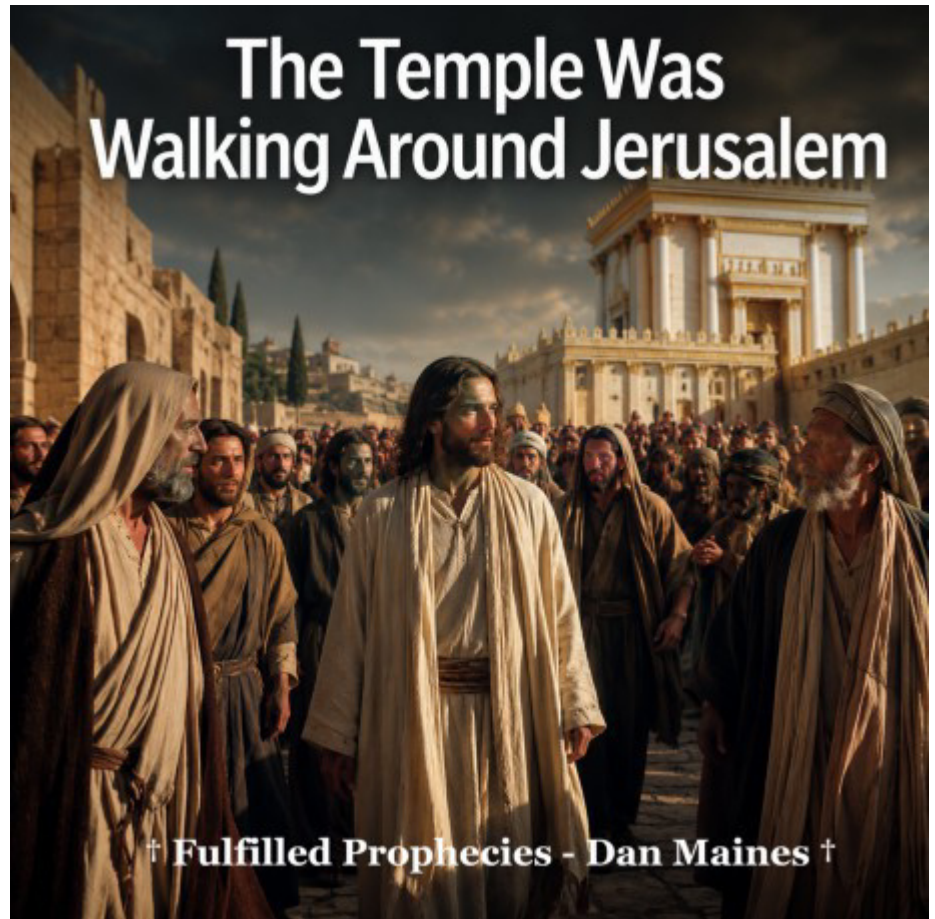


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The Temple Was Walking Around Jerusalem



By Dan Maines

The Temple Was Walking Around Jerusalem

Introduction

† One of the greatest truths hidden in plain sight is that the true temple of God was no longer a building of stone while Herod's temple was still standing.

† Jesus Himself became the dwelling place of God among men. While people admired the magnificent temple in Jerusalem, the

true Temple was walking its streets.

† This explains why Jesus could predict the destruction of the physical temple with complete confidence. God had already established a greater Temple that could never be destroyed.

† The New Testament repeatedly shifts our attention away from a physical building and toward Christ and His people as God's eternal dwelling place.

The One Greater Than The Temple

Matthew 12:6

But I say to you that something greater than the temple is here.

† Jesus announced that Someone greater than the temple had already arrived while the temple still stood. (Matthew 12:6)

† If Christ was greater than the temple, then God's presence was no longer centered in a building but in His Son. (John 1:14)

† This prepared Israel for the coming transition from the Old Covenant temple to the living Temple found in Christ. (Hebrews 8:13)

The True Temple Stood Before Them

John 2:19-21

Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and yet You will raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking about the temple of His body.

† Jesus identified His own body as the true temple, replacing the focus on the physical sanctuary. (John 1:14)

† The religious leaders were standing in front of God's true dwelling place without recognizing Him. (John 2:19-21)

† Long before AD 70, God revealed that His presence would be centered in Christ rather than in a building made with hands. (Colossians 2:9)

The Glory Had Entered A Better Temple

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

† The word dwelt literally carries the idea of tabernacled among men, showing that God's presence was now revealed in Christ. (John 1:14)

† The glory that once filled the tabernacle and temple was now seen in the Son of God. (Exodus 40:34-35)

† Jesus was everything the Old Covenant temple pointed toward, making Him the fulfillment of God's dwelling with His people. (Hebrews 1:1-3)

The Living Temple Was Being Built

Ephesians 2:19-22

So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together

into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

† Paul never directed believers back to the temple in Jerusalem because God was building a completely different temple. (Ephesians 2:19-22)

† This temple consisted of living people united in Christ, not stones assembled by human hands. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

† While the physical temple still stood, God was already constructing His eternal dwelling through the gospel. (Acts 2:41-47)

Living Stones Replace Dead Stones

1 Peter 2:4-6

And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by people, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in Scripture:

"Behold, I am laying in Zion a choice stone, a precious cornerstone, And the one who believes in Him will not be put to shame."

† Peter described Christians as living stones because God's house was no longer constructed with lifeless material. (1 Peter 2:4-6)

† Christ became the chief cornerstone of a spiritual house that would never need rebuilding. (Isaiah 28:16)

† Every believer became part of God's holy temple through union with Christ. (1 Peter 2:5)

Christ Is Faithful Over God's House

Hebrews 3:5-6

Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house-whose house we are, if we hold firmly to our confidence and the boast of our hope.

† Moses faithfully served within the old covenant house, but Christ rules over God's new house. (Hebrews 3:5-6)

† The writer plainly says whose house we are, identifying believers as God's present dwelling. (Hebrews 3:6)

† God's house is no longer identified by geography but by people who belong to Christ. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

The Old Temple Was Left Desolate

Matthew 23:37-38

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who have been sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!

† Jesus deliberately called it your house instead of My Father's house because judgment was approaching. (Matthew 23:38)

† God's presence had already departed from the unbelieving temple because the true Temple stood before them. (John 2:19-21)

† Within that generation the physical temple would fall, but God's true Temple would remain forever. (Matthew 24:1-2, 34)

Not One Stone Left Upon Another

Matthew 24:1-2

Jesus left the temple area and was going on His way when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. But He responded and said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down."

† Jesus left the temple and immediately declared its complete destruction. (Matthew 24:1-2)

† The physical temple was passing away because God's true dwelling had already been revealed in Christ. (John 2:19-21)

† The destruction of the temple publicly confirmed what God had already established through His Son. (Hebrews 9:8-10)

The Most High Does Not Dwell In Temples Made With Hands

Acts 7:48-50

However, the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands; as the prophet says:

'Heaven is My throne, And the earth is the footstool of My feet; What kind of house will you build for Me?' says the Lord, 'Or what place is there for My rest? Was it not My hand that made all these things?'

† Stephen declared that God's dwelling was never ultimately confined to a man-made building. (Acts 7:48-50)

† His message confirmed that the earthly temple had fulfilled its purpose in God's plan. (Isaiah 66:1-2)

† Shortly after preaching these words, Stephen was martyred, but the truth remained that God's presence was found in Christ, not in Herod's temple. (Acts 7:54-60)

God Does Not Live In Temples Made With Hands

Acts 17:24

The God who made the world and everything that is in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made by hands;

† Paul's teaching agreed perfectly with Jesus and Stephen that God was not confined to earthly sanctuaries. (Acts 17:24)

† The New Covenant reveals God's dwelling place to be His people through Christ. (Ephesians 2:19-22)

† The gospel was announcing a kingdom whose temple could never be destroyed by earthly armies. (Hebrews 12:28)

The Eternal Temple

Revelation 21:22

I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

† The New Jerusalem has no physical temple because God and the Lamb are its eternal dwelling. (Revelation 21:22)

† What Jesus began during His earthly ministry reached its covenant fulfillment as God's people became His everlasting

habitation. (Ephesians 2:21-22)

† The Bible ends exactly where Jesus pointed all along, God's presence is found in Christ, not in a building made with hands. (John 2:19-21)

Historical References

† Josephus records the destruction of Herod's temple by the Roman armies in AD 70, confirming Jesus' prophecy that not one stone would be left upon another. (The Wars of the Jews, Book 6, Chapters 4-5)

† Eusebius records that the Christians fled Jerusalem before its destruction, demonstrating they understood Jesus' warnings concerning the coming judgment upon the temple. (Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5)

† Tacitus records the Roman siege and destruction of Jerusalem, confirming the historical fulfillment of Christ's predictions. (Histories, Book 5)

† Irenaeus affirmed Christ as the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan, showing that the Old Covenant shadows found their completion in Him. (Against Heresies, Book 4, Chapter 33)

How It Applies To Us Today

† We don't travel to a physical temple because we have direct access to the Father through Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 2:18)

† Our worship is centered on Christ, not on sacred buildings or earthly locations. (John 4:21-24)

† We are part of God's living temple because His Spirit dwells within His people. (Ephesians 2:22)

† Our confidence rests in the eternal house Christ established, one that can never be destroyed by men. (Hebrews 12:28)

Q & A Appendix

Q: When did the true temple replace the physical temple?

A: The transition began during Jesus' earthly ministry when He identified His own body as the true temple and was completed through His death, resurrection, ascension, and the establishment of the New Covenant. The destruction of the Jerusalem temple in AD 70 publicly confirmed what God had already established in Christ. (John 2:19-21; Ephesians 2:19-22; Hebrews 8:13)

Q: Why did Jesus predict the destruction of the temple?

A: Because the physical temple had fulfilled its purpose. God's presence was no longer centered in a building but in Christ and His people. (Matthew 23:38; Matthew 24:1-2; Ephesians 2:21-22)

Q: Where is God's temple today?

A: God's temple is His people united in Christ. Believers are God's spiritual house and His dwelling place through the Holy Spirit. (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:19-22; Hebrews 3:6)

Q: What is the great wow moment of this truth?

A: While people were looking at Herod's magnificent temple, the true Temple of God was walking around Jerusalem in the person of Jesus Christ. The building had become obsolete before its stones ever fell. (John 1:14; John 2:19-21)

Q: If Jesus was the true Temple, why did people continue worshiping at the temple in Jerusalem?

A: Because the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant was taking place during that generation. The apostles continued preaching in the temple until its God-appointed destruction in AD 70, but they proclaimed that Christ was the true dwelling place of God. (John 2:19-21; Acts 3:1; Acts 5:42; Hebrews 8:13)

Q: Why didn't God destroy the temple immediately after Jesus' resurrection?

A: God gave Israel time to repent while the gospel was first preached to Jerusalem and Judea. The temple remained standing during this transition period until the judgment Jesus foretold came upon that generation. (Matthew 23:37-38; Matthew 24:34; Luke 21:20-22; Acts 2:38-40)

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Matthew 12:6; Matthew 23:37-38; Matthew 24:1-2, 34; John 1:14; John 2:19-21; Acts 3:1; Acts 5:42; Acts 7:48-50; Acts 17:24; Revelation 21:22; Exodus 40:34-35; Isaiah 28:16; Isaiah 66:1-2; Ephesians 2:18-22; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:1-3; Hebrews 3:5-6; Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 9:8-10; Hebrews 12:22-24, 28; 1 Peter 2:4-6

† Josephus, The Wars of the Jews, Book 6, Chapters 4-5; Tacitus, Histories, Book 5; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5; Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 4, Chapter 33

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