

## YE REALLY ARE GOD'S TEMPLE

### I. Mark 13:1-2 John 1:14 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 Ephesians 2:19-22 1 Peter 2:4-5 Revelation 21:1-7

A. Last Sunday we read from Exodus 35 & 36 as God instructed His people through Moses to build the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting. This would be the place where God dwelt among His people. Here they would worship God and make sacrifices for the atonement of their sins. It was a portable structure because the people would wander in the wilderness for 40 years. Once they settled in the Promised Land, the Tabernacle would be replaced by the Temple in Jerusalem...

B. While King David collected materials for the first Temple, the task of construction would fall to David's son, Solomon. This place of worship would make the skin-covered Tabernacle look like a cheap pup tent. But after Solomon's death, Israel split into two nations; Judah & Benjamin to the south and the other ten tribes to the north. The northern tribes would make their capital city, Samaria. Jerusalem, remained the southern nation's capital. Sin plagued both nations. Israel fell first to the Assyrians. Judah would fall 135 years later to the Babylonians who sacked Jerusalem and destroyed Solomon's Temple...

C. Babylon later fell to the Persians. Persia treated the Judean captives more kindly, allowing their return to their homeland where they rebuilt Jerusalem and the Temple. Many centuries later it would be totally rebuilt by Herod the Great who made it an architectural marvel, rivaling the 7 wonders of the world, twice the size of the Acropolis in Athens. Listen to Jewish historian Flavius Josephus describe the temple in His day: "The outward face of the temple in its front lacked nothing that was likely to surprise either men's minds or their eyes, for it was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and, at the first rising of the sun, reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's own rays. This temple appeared to strangers when they were at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow, for, as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceedingly white."

D. But Jesus' words to His disciples found in Mark 13:1-2 (NLT) are more telling: *1 As Jesus was leaving the Temple that day, one of His disciples said, "Teacher, look at these magnificent buildings! Look at the impressive stones in the walls."* *2 Jesus replied, "Yes, look at these great buildings. But they will be completely demolished. Not one stone will be left on top of another!"* (Matthew and Luke affirm the same as Mark...)

E. In 70 AD, just as Jesus had foretold, Jerusalem and the temple were leveled by Titus, son of Roman emperor, Vespasian. Today all that really remains is a retaining wall, better known as *The Wailing Wall* as the original temple site is occupied by the Muslim *Dome of the Rock*. Still some Jews hope for the temple to be rebuilt. But today's there's a better temple--do you know about that one?

F. Could it be St. Peter's Basilica in Rome? Or Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, the one almost destroyed by fire in 2019? Could it be the Crystal Cathedral in California? Or could it be The Basilica of Our Lady of Peace of Yamoussoukro?

\* The Basilica of Our Lady of Peace of Yamoussoukro in the Ivory Coast, Africa, is the largest church in the world. It was designed to replicate St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. It will hold 18,000 people--7,000 sitting and another 11,000 standing. It was built in the late 1980s by then president, Félix Houphouët-Boigny at the cost of 300 million dollars and he proudly called it *'the greatest church in the world.'* One of the stained glass panes actually depicts Boigny as one of the Magi, offering a gift to Jesus. It's marble was imported from Italy and some of the columns are so large they contain elevators. There are over 7,000 square meters of stained glass and the annual cost to maintain the facility is 1.5 million dollars. Sadly, this church sits just about empty every Sunday morning...

G. What if I were to tell you that you are now that Tabernacle, that Temple, the place where God dwells, abides, makes His home? As always, let's go to the Scriptures...

1) **John 1:14 (AMPC) says: 14** *And the Word (Christ) became flesh (human, incarnate) and tabernacled (fixed His tent of flesh, lived awhile) among us; and we [actually] saw His glory (His honor, His majesty), such glory as an only begotten son receives from his father, full of grace (favor, loving-kindness) and truth. (Jesus--our Tabernacle, our Temple.)*

2) **1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NLT) says it clearly: 16** *Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? 17* *God will destroy anyone who destroys this temple. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. (Gary Founds on the accordion: "Know ye not, know ye not, you're the temple...")*

3) **Ephesians 2:19-22 (NIV) is clearer still: 19** *Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of His household, 20* *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the Chief Cornerstone. 21* *In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22* *And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.*

4) **1 Peter 2:4-5 (ESV) echoes: 4** *As you come to Him, (Jesus) a living Stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5* *you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, (Temple!) to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

H. On TV there's numerous fixer-upper shows. The templet for these shows is similar in that they take a home or cabin that's in bad shape and they generate a computerized plan as to how they want it to look. (*We might call that a vision.*) Then they commence to doing the work. First they demo with sledge hammers and crowbars, ripping apart the old in preparation for the new. Typically hidden issues are discovered such as bad wiring, plumbing, rotten wood, or sagging foundations. Once these are addressed, they move on. New construction takes place. Specialty items are custom made so the homeowners have some connection to the past with items that have been repurposed for their new abode. New furniture arrives. Decorations are placed. And then comes the big reveal...

I. Never do we see a disappointed couple or family hating what the designers and remodelers have brought forth. They're always amazed. Tears often flow. Happy tears that is. No one regrets that the old has past and the new has come. He who has ears let

him hear! *'He who began a good work in us, both individually and collectively, will be faithful to bring His projects to grand fruition!'* That includes with us. It'll be surprising, amazing, and astounding when the final big reveal comes! But in the meantime we hear hammering and clanging and sawing and drilling and see piles of debris, holes in walls, as well as dirt and dust everywhere. *"Oh but those who wait upon the Lord..."*

**J. Revelation 21:1-7 (NIV) is our vision of our ultimate place of worship:** *1 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then He said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be My children.*

\* Close with Prayer...

## Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

### Mark 13:1-2 (NLT)

**1** As Jesus was leaving the Temple that day, one of His disciples said, "Teacher, look at these magnificent buildings! Look at the impressive stones in the walls." **2** Jesus replied, "Yes, look at these great buildings. But they will be completely demolished. Not one stone will be left on top of another!"

### John 1:14 (AMPC)

**14** And the Word (Christ) became flesh (human, incarnate) and tabernacled (fixed His tent of flesh, lived awhile) among us; and we [actually] saw His glory (His honor, His majesty), such glory as an only begotten son receives from his father, full of grace (favor, loving-kindness) and truth.

### 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NLT)

**16** Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? **17** God will destroy anyone who destroys this temple. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

### Ephesians 2:19-22 (NIV)

**19** Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of His household, **20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone. **21** In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. **22** And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.

### **1 Peter 2:4-5 (ESV)**

**4** As you come to Him, a living Stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, **5** you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

### **Revelation 21:1-7 (NIV)**

**1** Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. **2** I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. **4** ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” **5** He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then He said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” **6** He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. **7** Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be My children.

### **The Temple in Jerusalem - Historian, Flavius Josephus**

"The outward face of the temple in its front lacked nothing that was likely to surprise either men's minds or their eyes, for it was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and, at the first rising of the sun, reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's own rays. This temple appeared to strangers when they were at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow, for, as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceedingly white."

- Josephus, 5th book, *The Jewish Wars*.

### **Bonus Goodies**

#### **The Temple - The Bible Project**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTnq6I3vUbU>

#### **Who Is The Church? - Jeff Vanderstelt (Desiring God)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfqsoSJ-Fgk>

#### **Jerusalem History: The First and Second Temples - Moon.com**

<https://www.moon.com/travel/arts-culture/jerusalem-history-first-second-temples/>

#### **The Babylonian Conquest of Jerusalem & Destruction of the Temple - Megalim Institute**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ZZbhDoYHX0>

**The Roman Destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD - Megalim Institute**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5vuoX09ryw>

**The Basilica of Our Lady of Peace of Yamoussoukro**  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrcfPdTRu0M>

### **[More Verses, Quotes, Excerpts, & Extras](#)**

#### **[Psalm 27:4-6 \(NLT\)](#)**

**4** The one thing I ask of the LORD—the thing I seek most—is to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, delighting in the LORD's perfections and meditating in His Temple. **5** For He will conceal me there when troubles come; He will hide me in His sanctuary. He will place me out of reach on a high rock. **6** Then I will hold my head high above my enemies who surround me. At His sanctuary I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy, singing and praising the LORD with music.

#### **[Nehemiah 1:1-4 \(AMP\)](#)**

**1** The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah: Now it happened in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year [of the Persian king], as I was in the capitol of Susa, **2** Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them about the surviving Jews who had escaped and survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. **3** They said to me, "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach; the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its [fortified] gates have been burned (destroyed) by fire." **4** Now it came about when I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying [constantly] before the God of heaven.

#### **[Matthew 24:1-2 \(ESV\)](#)**

**1** Jesus left the temple and was going away, when His disciples came to point out to Him the buildings of the temple. **2** But He answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."

#### **[Luke 21:5-6 \(NLT\)](#)**

**5** Some of his disciples began talking about the majestic stonework of the Temple and the memorial decorations on the walls. But Jesus said, **6** "The time is coming when all these things will be completely demolished. Not one stone will be left on top of another!"

#### **[John 2:13-22 \(NASB\)](#)**

**13** The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14** And within the temple grounds He found those who were selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. **15** And He made a whip of cords, and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; **16** and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away from here; stop making My Father's

house a place of business!" **17** His disciples remembered that it was written: "Zeal for Your house will consume me." **18** The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?" **19** Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." **20** The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and yet You will raise it up in three days?" **21** But He was speaking about the temple of His body. **22** So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

### **1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (AMP)**

**16** Do you not know and understand that you [the church] are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells [permanently] in you [collectively and individually]? **17** If anyone destroys the temple of God [corrupting it with false doctrine], God will destroy the destroyer; for the temple of God is holy (sacred), and that is what you are.

### **2 Corinthians 6:16 (ESV)**

**16** What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make My dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

### **Ephesians 2:19-22 (AMP)**

**19** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens [outsiders without rights of citizenship], but you are fellow citizens with the saints (God's people), and are [members] of God's household, **20** having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the [chief] Cornerstone, **21** in whom the whole structure is joined together, and it continues [to increase] growing into a holy temple in the Lord [a sanctuary dedicated, set apart, and sacred to the presence of the Lord]. **22** In Him [and in fellowship with one another] you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

### **1 Peter 2:4-5 (NLT)**

**4** You are coming to Christ, who is the living Cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but He was chosen by God for great honor. **5** And you are living stones that God is building into His spiritual temple. What's more, you are His holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.

### **Hebrews 12:12-24 (NIV)**

**12** Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. **13** "Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed. **14** Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. **15** See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. **16** See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. **17** Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. Even though he sought the blessing with tears, he could not change what he had done. **18** You have not

come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; **19** to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, **20** because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death." **21** The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear." **22** But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, **23** to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, **24** to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

### **Herod's Temple, It's Splendor and Destruction**

Author Unknown but with quotes from Flavius Josephus

Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian from the first century, describes the building like this: "The outward face of the temple in its front lacked nothing that was likely to surprise either men's minds or their eyes, for it was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and, at the first rising of the sun, reflected back a very fiery splendour, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's own rays. This temple appeared to strangers when they were at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow, for, as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceedingly white."

'Then did the famine widen its progress and devoured the people by whole houses and families. The upper rooms were full of women and children dying of starvation. The lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged. The children and the young men wandered about the market places like shadows, all swelled with famine, and fell down dead wheresoever their misery seized them. As for burying them, those that were sick themselves were not able to do it. And those that were hearty and well were deterred by the great multitude of the dead, and the uncertainty when they would die themselves, for many died as they were burying others, and many went to their own coffins before the fatal hour. There was no lamentation made under these calamities. The famine confounded all natural passions. A deep silence and a kind of deadly night seized the city.'

'Some persons were driven to such terrible distress as to search the common sewers and old dunghills of cattle, and to eat the dung which they got there, and what they could not endure so much as to see, they now used for food'. (*Josephus also describes men gnawing the leather of straps and shoes, and tells a story of a woman who killed and roasted her child, and offered a share of that terrible meal to those who came seeking food.*)

On August 30 in the year 70 Jerusalem fell and the temple was entered. Titus led in his generals; he pulled aside the curtain before the Holy of Holies and walked in and looked

around. There was nothing there. The ark of the covenant had disappeared at the time of the exile to Babylon 500 years earlier. It was simply an empty room - much to Titus' disappointment. What an anticlimax to him. Then the army brought its standards into the great temple area and filled that vast plaza of stone pavement with ranks of soldiers. Then they sacrificed to their standards praising their gods for giving them the victory and hailing Titus as the Imperator. Then the soldiers looted the temple, but Titus was impressed with the building and he ordered that it shouldn't be destroyed. But God had said not a stone would be left on another, and so what happened was this, that as the soldiers attempted to melt the gold on its walls the temple caught alight. There was a huge conflagration and the temple was gutted. Titus then ordered that the whole city, temple and all, to be razed to the ground. The soldiers, hunting for hidden gold, levered stones apart one by one and pushed them down to the ground. Titus ended the horrors of those months by ordering the crucifixion of thousands of Jews. Josephus sums up the consequences for Jerusalem in one sentence: "There was left nothing to make those who had come thither believe it had ever been inhabited." The Lord Jesus speaks these somber words, "Those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now - and never to be equaled again" (v.19).

- Josephus, 5th book, *The Jewish Wars*.

\* In the fall of Jerusalem, Titus slaughtered 1,100 Jews (many by crucifixion) and took another 97,000 captive.