



Is This the Greatest Prophetic Fulfillment of Our Time?

Prophesied more than 100 years **before** the first deportation into the Babylonian Captivity:

***It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd!
And he will perform all My desire.'
And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,'
And of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.'"***
— Isaiah 44:28

Fulfilled more than 170 years **after** Isaiah's prophecy when Babylon was long conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire and Cyrus ruled as king while Israel was still exiled:

Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel: He is the God who is in Jerusalem. Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.'"
— Ezra 1:2-4

There are only four specific structures which God authorized His people to construct:

- The Tabernacle (Ex. 25-31), which came through Moses and Aaron;
- The First Temple— or Solomon's Temple (1 Ki. 5-8)— which came through David and Solomon;
- The Second Temple (Ezra, Haggai and Zechariah), which came through Joshua and Zerubbabel;
- And what is commonly referred to as the Millennial Temple, revealed to come as prophesied through Ezekiel. (Ez. 40-44)

It is no small detail to be ignored that each of these came about by the direct commandment of God, and with the exception of the final Millennial Temple, assigned to be managed by a pair of His servants.

There are many who will notice that I have left out what they call the "Third Temple" (which I will instead call the "Tribulational Temple"), pointing out that the Olivet Discourse (Mt. 24-25; Mk. 13; Lk. 21), Paul's teaching in 2 Thessalonians 2, and Revelation 11/13 all reference an obvious temple in existence and operating during the final week of years. Many have omitted the fact that this particular structure, although obviously acknowledged obliquely in Scripture, is never mandated by God nor divinely

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sanctified as an activity to be pursued either by His people in general or through a pair of specified servants. It seems that far too many have failed to recognize that the Tribulational Temple is never mentioned in the context of a God-mandated project but is primarily associated with the appearance and activities of the Antichrist.

This is a very important point to keep in mind today as prophetic events unfold before our very eyes in Jerusalem: the Tribulational Temple is a satanic counterfeit whose sole purpose is to focus worship on Satan through his pair of servants, the Antichrist and False Prophet. When it finally comes into existence, its first 3-1/2 years of operation is for the purpose of deceiving the Jews. Then at the midway point it all changes for both the Jews and the whole world when the Tribulational Temple hosts the seminal event of the Abomination of Desolation, at which time the satanically possessed Antichrist declares himself to be God. From that milestone to the end it serves as the center of focused satanic worship under threat of death to everyone on the planet and comes into conflict with God's representatives, the Two Witnesses.

Prior to the Abomination of Desolation it is only the Church who is under sentence of death where the Antichrist is concerned as everyone else can keep their religious preference and worship him in their chosen manner, but after it is the whole world who must worship him directly under penalty of death. The time comes when he no longer desires to be worshiped indirectly through his woman Babylon the Great (the one-world religion), but directly with no intermediary. Whereas Christ loves His Bride the Church and sees that she participates in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, Satan essentially divorces and kills his woman Babylon the Great. (Rev. 17-18)

Far too many Christians are looking forward to seeing this temple built, romanticizing the events of Jesus in the Second Temple during the First Coming. Many have already contributed financially to this project through the Temple Institute who has everything ready and is merely waiting for permission to build, and even paying the annual temple tax which the nascent Sanhedrin began collecting in recent years. It seems the average Christian is either ignoring the prophetic implications of the Tribulational Temple altogether or romanticizing it out of all reasonable context of Scripture.

A Brief Biblical Reminder

Now before I go into the details as to what has been taking place before our very eyes these past few years, and before everyone gets completely offended by my opening statements concerning the true purpose of this imminent building project, allow me to refresh everyone's memory with a little Theology 101. In reality, even though the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 AD, God has ***never*** been without His authorized temple from the Day of Pentecost to this very hour:

*Do you not know that **you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?** If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.*

— 1 Corinthians 3:16-17

Or do you not know that **your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you**, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

— 1 Corinthians 6:19

Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For **we are the temple of the living God**; just as God said,

"I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM;

AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the LORD.

"AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN;

And I will welcome you.

And I will be a father to you,

And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,"

Says the LORD Almighty.

— 2 Corinthians 6:16-18

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, 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 corner stone, 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**.

— Ephesians 2:19-22

I am going to assume that you are getting the obvious message from Scripture that as members of the Body of Christ, **WE** are the only legitimate Temple. And does anyone really want me to re-present the content of the book of Hebrews to verify that everything they are going to attempt to re-start in this new temple has all been fulfilled by Christ? As sincere as some unbelieving Jews sound, we must not forget that they're still **unbelieving** Jews who are carrying some God-given baggage where God's Word is concerned:

But **their minds were hardened**; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant **the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ**. But to this day whenever Moses is read, **a veil lies over their heart**; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

— 2 Corinthians 3:14-16

Having been deceived by their rejection of Christ, they have been given over to the ultimate deceiver until that seminal transaction of the Abomination of Desolation. They are not actually building something to God (which would create an alternate path to heaven without Christ), but will discover when it is too late to stop that they have been used to actually pave the way for Satan.

Some may point out that, for approximately 35 years, the Second Temple was allowed to co-exist with the Church. We must keep in mind the context of why both were permitted to operate in parallel for a few decades in that God relented in order to allow Israel to repent and accept their Messiah. We are specifically told, "**For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.**" (Rom. 1:15) There is a concentrated effort by the

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Early Church to first evangelize ethnic Israel before the Church expands to the rest of the world and engages in a mainly Gentile-focused ministry. But time runs out for the Second Temple.

As it turns out, when Israel realized that the temple which was destroyed in 70 AD was not going to be re-built within any reasonable time line, and having the intent of attempting to salvage Judaism in the Diaspora, their religious authorities begin the process which will ultimately redefine it into a new religion: the temple is replaced by the synagogue, the priesthood is replaced by the rabbis, and the Mosaic sacrifices replaced by good works. Instead of actually salvaging Judaism, their ever-hardening hearts substituted a false religion in its place. And it's that false religion which has blinded them to the truth of what they are pursuing at present, thinking they are once again rebuilding a temple for God when in reality this will be a monument to Satan. From the beginning Satan has had the motivating desire to replace God. (Is. 14:13-14) At the same time, however, he wants to look like God by counterfeiting everything associated with Him.

In most cases, Jews are no longer consulting Scripture, but allowing the extra-biblical writings of the Talmud and Midrashim to shape their efforts by interpreting God's Word for them. Their hearts are now so hardened that they no longer give God's Word the overriding authority. To show just how far they have strayed, it is not uncommon for Israeli news sources to report on rabbis who declare that prophecy recorded in the Talmud or Midrashim is being fulfilled! Not **biblical** prophecy, but **Talmudic** prophecy. (And it is not uncommon to read reports of rabbis in Israel who claim to be announcing their own prophecies.) Such is the degree to which they've raised the authority of extra-biblical writings over the primacy of God's Word itself. We criticize Mormons for elevating their book over the Bible, but present-day Judaism is just as guilty when it comes to the Talmud, Midrashim and even the Zohar, and in many cases even more so.

So the primary thing to keep in mind is that no temple built on their part will biblically succeed nor is it sanctified by God.

The Past Two Decembers

During Hanukkah in December of 2018, a seminal fulfillment of a biblically prophetic event took place in that the Temple Institute brought out the altar they designed for the Tribulational Temple, erected it near the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, dressed up those they deemed qualified as priests, and re-started the Old Testament sacrifices. This was not a one-time event but has continued to the present with their having now included nearly every ritual from the daily sacrifices to the Day of Atonement. Yes, they actually brought to that altar a pair of goats this past year to be sacrificed for the Day of Atonement. But beginning with the Passover lamb a few years ago, every ritual appears to have now been reinstated.

This is no coincidental detail because in each mention of the Abomination of Desolation in Daniel, there is a specific stipulation that this event will also end those sacrifices:

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*And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, **but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice** and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”*

— Daniel 9:27

*Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and **do away with the regular sacrifice**. And they will set up the abomination of desolation.*

— Daniel 11:31

*From the time that **the regular sacrifice is abolished** and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.*

— Daniel 12:11

In other words, the Abomination of Desolation **cannot** take place without the reinstatement of the Mosaic sacrifices so that they may once again be disrupted. And they were reinstated in late 2018 for this very purpose, even though present-day Jewish authorities do not realize it.

It seems that most commentators assume that the sacrifices won't resume until the Tribulational Temple is built, but instead they have already started! As it turns out, this is **exactly** what took place in the course of rebuilding the Second Temple in Ezra's time:

*Now when the seventh month came, and the sons of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem. Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brothers the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers arose and **built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God.***

*So **they set up the altar on its foundation**, for they were terrified because of the peoples of the lands; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, burnt offerings morning and evening. They celebrated the Feast of Booths, as it is written, and offered the fixed number of burnt offerings daily, according to the ordinance, as each day required; and afterward there was a continual burnt offering, also for the new moons and for all the fixed festivals of the LORD that were consecrated, and from everyone who offered a freewill offering to the LORD.*

*From the first day of the seventh month **they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, but the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid.***

— Ezra 3:1-6

Before the foundations of the Second Temple were even laid, they erected the temple's altar and restored the sacrifices. And likewise, they have done the same today. A key component toward the ultimate fulfillment of the Abomination of Desolation has taken

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place in our time. There can no longer be any doubt that the Antichrist and False Prophet are alive and walking among us, and that the 70th Week of Daniel is now on our horizon instead of just beyond.

During Hanukkah this past December in 2019, the current Sanhedrin gathered representatives from “the 70 nations” to the Temple Mount to sing and pray together and publicly declare their support for building and operating the anticipated temple. (Biblically there are 70 nations listed in the genealogy of Noah after the Flood in Genesis 10 from which all nations are deemed to be descended.) In other words, representatives of Israel stood co-equally beside those representing every Gentile nation on earth. In fact, both the Sanhedrin and the Temple Institute have called for the worldwide support and participation of **every** Gentile nation. This is contrary to what took place in the course of the Second Temple when a huge effort was undertaken to **exclude** Gentile participation:

*Now when the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people of the exile were building a temple to the Lord God of Israel, they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' households, and said to them, “**Let us build with you**, for we, like you, seek your God; and we have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”*

*But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of fathers' households of Israel said to them, “**You have nothing in common with us in building a house to our God; but we ourselves will together build to the LORD God of Israel.**” as King Cyrus, the king of Persia has commanded us.”*

*Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building,
— Ezra 4:1-4*

These are but two obvious deviations from what took place under Joshua and Zerubbabel which betray this modern-day effort as a counterfeit. It **feels** like it's a fulfillment of God's Word but alters the details so as to show its true colors.

Just as Satan comes on a white horse (Rev. 6:1-2) in a pre-counterfeit of Christ who will come with His armies on a white horse, (Rev. 19:11-16) the details are altered so that instead of having many crowns like Christ, the counterfeit only has one; instead of a two-edged sword in His mouth, the counterfeit carries a bow; instead of coming with a heavenly host, he is manipulating an earthly force. If all that you remember is that Christ will return on a white horse and fail to consult Scripture, you will be deceived by the counterfeit. But to the faithful virgins with oil in their lamps (the anointing of the Spirit in the Word), the deviations will be obvious and unavoidable. (Mt. 25:1-13)

That is precisely what took place during these past two Hanukkahs: a clever counterfeit has largely slipped by unnoticed. Just as it was in the course of the First Coming, the fulfillment of biblical prophecy is being ignored because it does not fit the narrative or expectations of the majority of Christian scholars, authors and website operators. We would appear to have entered a time when the illumination of Scripture is at an all-time low because the “Foolish Virgins” far outnumber the “Wise Virgins”, and many others

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whose hearts have been hardened by their long-held presuppositions or willful ignorance.

The Issue of the Priesthood

Answering the question of who is and who is not a “Jew” is very tricky, and nowhere on earth is it more passionately argued than in Israel itself.

One of the main reasons Israel is at the apex of genetics research and hosts what is considered to be the top technology companies in the world when it comes to genetic tools and products is their desire to resolve this issue, especially when it comes to figuring out to which tribe a Jew belongs. This is a major effort to determine ethnicity, but it is complicated by the issue of those who convert to Judaism the religion and self-identify as a Jew, especially if they or their lineage has intermarried with ethnically pure Jews. Within these two scenarios there are multiplied categories which make it extremely difficult to navigate, including those who consider themselves a Jew who practice no religion at all. I suppose the answer to, “Who is a Jew?” depends on who is asking the question and which standard they are applying to the situation. But this issue also complicates the question of who is a qualified priest or Levite who can serve in the temple. After a 2,000 year “pause”, it’s not easy to definitively answer this question.

The first obstacle one must navigate in this discussion is whether one is using the term “Jew” to describe ethnicity or religion. When it comes to ethnicity, the majority of religious Jews who give priority to the teachings of the Talmud rely on a couple of scriptural passages to make the case that Jewish ethnicity is handed down through the mother, even though this is not explicitly specified. Such begin with the Torah to begin its explanation with a Scripture...

“Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you.

— Deuteronomy 7:3-4

...but then combine this with this event in Ezra in the course of their return from the Babylonian Captivity:

Now when these things had been completed, the princes approached me, saying, “The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, according to their abominations, those of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians and the Amorites. For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has intermingled with the peoples of the lands; indeed, the hands of the princes and the rulers have been foremost in this unfaithfulness.”

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When I heard about this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled some of the hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled.

— Ezra 9:1-3

The prominent mention of wives and marriage in these passages is what causes their interpretation to lean toward ethnicity being something which comes through the mother.

First of all, the context of intermarriage in Deuteronomy 7 is provided in the previous verses to be basically limited to the same list found in Ezra 9, in that it is only the Canaanite nations whom God designated for destruction in the Promised Land who they are prohibited from marrying, not any and every Gentile nation:

*When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, **the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites**, seven nations greater and stronger than you, and when the LORD your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.*

— Deuteronomy 7:1-2

It is the same in Ezra 9 when it is discovered that many of the priests and Levites intermarried with these specific people groups, but not any and every Gentile nation. But the Talmud, as it typically does, employs in this instance a “fence” around the biblical teaching, and first of all limits ethnicity as coming through the woman to ensure Jewish men only marry Jewish women no matter what, and another fence to forbid marrying any and all Gentiles. In this manner, they believe this will ensure that no one marries a descendant of one of these forbidden people groups even by accident because they have forbidden marriage with all Gentiles and limited lineage to just Jewish females.

But in the course of rebuilding the Second Temple, there was a problem with the qualifications of the priests and Levites, and a similar problem needed to be resolved in modern times: how to determine, two thousand years after the destruction of the temple, who exactly is qualified to fill the role of priest or Levite? Whereas the issue in Ezra’s day confined the problem to those who intermarried with the specifically forbidden Canaanite nations, the modern conundrum has involved trying to determine lineage according to the Talmud’s extra-biblical standard of intermarriage with any Gentile female and establishing that proof for the past 2,000 years and beyond.

There are those who claim to have maintained an unbroken genealogical record of their lineage, and many whose claims are more anecdotal in nature. This is one of the reasons for Israel’s heightened interest in genetics, as well as determining lineage by family names as they have changed in this two millennia long Diaspora. For instance, it is thought that present day Jews with the last name in its Western iteration of “Cohen” is a derivation of the Hebrew word “Kohan” for priest. Christian commentators have long identified this problem as an obstacle which must be overcome in the Last Days with all manner of theories as to how it will be resolved. However, this became a completely moot issue during Hanukkah 2018 when the sacrifices were reinstated.

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Between the Sanhedrin and the Temple Institute (in which there is a great deal of cross-membership), those deemed sanctified by these institutions have assumed the role of priest, not just performing sacrificial and holiday rituals, but dressing in the priestly garb designed for use in the Tribulational Temple. They are not only using that temple's altar, but all the priestly vestments, utensils and even trumpets all likewise designed. They are already taking up the roles they will carry out when the temple structure is built. In a single day, however, this much debated topic was resolved without controversy. In other words, none of it matters any more because the Sanhedrin has definitively put the issue to rest by instituting their own criteria. Some of those selected may have the correct qualifications, but it is difficult to believe that even the majority of those assigned this role have a documented, uninterrupted lineage over the past two thousand years which meets the Talmud's qualifications. But even so, it has all been done according to man's rules, not God's Word.

The point is that when the authentic temple of God was about to be constructed in Ezra's day, a purification of the priesthood took place in a prolonged and excruciating process in order to ensure that only those biblically qualified once again took up their roles and positions in the Second Temple. In the current counterfeit for which they are currently preparing, the standard of God's Word has been replaced by man's standards so that the faux structure will be serviced by a faux priesthood. Ezra only had to deal with a 70 year interruption before Israel returned to the land and built the Second Temple and Scripture was still the authoritative standard over all of their activities; at present a two millennia sabbatical has allowed Scripture to take a back seat to man's rules and authority. An unauthorized temple is about to be manned by an unauthorized priesthood, so it should be no surprise to Christians that together they work not only to prepare the way for the Antichrist, but the deception by which Israel will initially accept and even support him.

But if such corruption resulted in just a 70-year interruption in Ezra's day, to what degree has a 2,000-year recess introduced a multiplied corruption? And it is even much more difficult today because it is man's standard rather than God's Word which has been adopted, making it even more tangled and unseemly that anyone is actually qualified at this point.

In the end, however, this raises another Theology 101 issue. Just as the Church has replaced the Temple, so has its members replaced the priesthood and constitute the **only** priesthood recognized at present by God:

*And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, 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 up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.***

— 1 Peter 2:4-5

The Issue of Participation

*Now when **the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people of the exile were building a temple to the LORD God of Israel,** they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' households, and said to them, "**Let us build with you,** for we, like you, seek your God; and we have been*

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sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here.”

*But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of fathers’ households of Israel said to them, “**You have nothing in common with us in building a house to our God**; but we ourselves will together build to the LORD God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia has commanded us.”*
— Ezra 4:1-3

When the Northern Kingdom of Israel was carried away by Assyria, the practice of the day was for the conquering king to order various other conquered peoples removed from their lands and relocated to Israel and those from Israel sent in return to their lands. Everyone was displaced and relocated. The same thing took place when the Southern Kingdom of Judah was removed by Babylon. So there were many Gentiles from a wide array of conquered nations who were forced to take up residence within the previous boundaries of the nation of Israel. This is why they are saying that many of them had been there “*since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us up here*”. In other words, these Gentile descendants came from those originally resettled there nearly 200 years earlier.

It was likewise a common, ancient belief that each land was governed by a different god. As inhabitants of this new land’s god, the relocated Gentiles would make sacrifices out of respect, even if they never took that entity for their own god. This is an important cultural detail because it means that although they can truthfully claim, “*we have been sacrificing to Him*”, they have not been doing so with anything close to the biblical requirements provided in the Torah. Instead, they would have been “worshiping” Yahweh in the same manner they worshiped the gods of their previous lands, which God repeatedly states in Scripture is an abomination to Him.

Therefore while there may still be descendants of the specific Canaanite tribes previously listed with whom Israel was categorically instructed to not just stay away from but to destroy, there are now additional Gentiles in and around Israel. And when it comes to the temple, Joshua and Zerubbabel specifically take the politically incorrect stand, “*You have nothing in common with us in building a house to our God*”. Outside participation was forbidden, even though it would delay the project. Later in Ezra 4 we’ll learn that these rejected Gentiles get the new King of Babylon to delay further construction by lying to him that the returning Jews have begun to rebuild the city of Jerusalem instead of just the temple, and that this city would once again become an independent power in that region depriving the king of his share of taxes. Much of the book of Haggai documents what it took to set the temple project back in motion.

Since Hanukkah of 2018, there have been repeated invitations and even conferences hosted by the Sanhedrin inviting the 70 nations to come and participate in the building of another temple in Jerusalem. In other words, instead of restricting this project to just God’s people who are supposed to worship Him according to His Word, the present-day initiative is calling for any and all worshipers of any god to participate, especially financially. Sometimes these calls have been accompanied by requesting the nations to also implement the Noahide Covenant— that is, the laws given to Noah after the Flood which many Jewish sects recognize as applying to all the nations which came from Noah’s offspring, but at other times they have only asked for observance of the

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Sabbath. In either case, this was not the message Israel was intended to communicate to the rest of the world.

Additionally, for the past few years they have reinstated the temple tax. Nehemiah 10:32 documents the annual collection of a yearly third of a shekel for the house of God. By Christ's First Coming it was increased to a half-shekel as seen by Christ miraculously supplying Peter with a shekel to pay the tax for them both. (Mt. 17:27) They actually misapply Exodus 30:13, which describes a census tax, as the justification for the tax, and the restriction on taking a census whenever it suits them. (Remember what happened to David in 2 Samuel 2:10-14?) However, at no previous time did God or man require the tax from anyone except Jews alone. In the course of collecting this tax again, **all** the 70 nations have been encouraged to pay the half shekel tax.

The tax was supposed to be collected in the form of exchanging one's goods for silver weighed according to the temple standard of "20 *gerahs*" for a full shekel. (Ex. 30:13; Num. 3:47, 18:16) This was the function of the money changers. In its modern-day iteration, they will send a silver coin in exchange for payment of the tax in cash. Whereas images on coins were tantamount to idolatry and viewed as a graven image, two of the coins minted have borne the images of Nikki Haley, former U. S. Ambassador to the U. N., and American President Donald Trump shown side-by-side with Cyrus from history past. Just recently a third coin was issued by the Sanhedrin featuring both Trump and Netanyahu to celebrate Purim. This is viewed as a way of marketing the tax to a broader Gentile audience. The currency bearing the image of Caesar which the hypocritical Pharisees objected to is apparently no longer an obstacle to their present-day progeny when it comes to financing the temple.

But this is yet another indicator of the counterfeit that is currently underway. **Anyone** can participate, **anyone** can contribute, **anyone** can join the ecumenical ranks of what is taking place. Proper conversion to Judaism is no longer a requirement as, like the Roman Pantheon of old, anyone serving any god can participate in the building of this particular temple. Whereas historically it has been the thought of most commentators that the Catholic Church would be the primary agent of the much anticipated one-world religion which will serve and worship Antichrist— and it most certainly will do so— it is modern-day Judaism which has joined the vanguard of that movement, albeit with their own agenda. They are working just as hard to bring **all** religions and nationalities under a single umbrella as their Catholic counterparts.

Work Resumes

*When the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them, then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the house of God which is in Jerusalem; **and the prophets of God were with them supporting them.***

— Ezra 5:1-2

There has been a biblical pattern to the previous God-authorized facilities:

- The Tabernacle was overseen by a pair of figures in Moses and Aaron.
- The First Temple was overseen by a pair of figures in David and Solomon.

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- The Second Temple was overseen in a pair of figures in Joshua and Zerubbabel and supported by prophets such as Iddo, Haggai and Zechariah.

In other words, the authentic in each case involved a pair of servants, which brings to mind the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11. And, in fact, the very first time they are overtly introduced in Scripture we find that they are associated from the outset with the Tribulational Temple.

*Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and **measure the temple** of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months. And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."*

— Revelation 11:1-4

Whenever we see someone in Scripture measuring something in this manner, the physical measurement is in reality reflecting a spiritual measurement. In other words, does that thing measure up to the standard of God's Word? Not having to bother to measure the court indicates it is automatically corrupt from God's point of view and reveals there will be a significant level of inappropriate Gentile involvement where this temple is concerned.

But with the onset of this measurement comes the introduction of the Two Witnesses. Notice that their authority is not extended over the entire final week of years but only half of it as expressed in "1,260 days". There are four parallel items in Revelation assigned to the second half of Daniel's 70th Week which all begin with the midway milestone of the Abomination of Desolation:

- The Ministry of the Two Witnesses— 1,260 days (Rev. 11:3)
- The Times of the Gentiles— 42 months (Lk. 21:24; Rev. 11:2)
- Israel's Flight into the Wilderness— 1,260 days (Lk. 21:21-22; Rev. 12:6)
- The Reign of Antichrist— 42 months (Rev.13:5)

Why does the Holy Spirit employ these units of measurement for 3-1/2 years instead of the also familiar "time, times and half a time"? (Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:14) Notice that "1,260 days" is used for the "good" guys— Israel and the Two Witnesses, and "42 months" for the "bad" guys— the Gentiles and the Antichrist. They take place in parallel to each other but are assigned these respective lengths to distinguish each other and, as it turns out, to explain the timing of the second half which Daniel states is 75 days longer than the first half. (A more detailed explanation of this is found in the author's book, [Revelation: A Final View.](#))

Christ's formal ministry, beginning with His baptism by John the Baptist, spanned 3-1/2 years. He obviously existed for the previous 30 years since His birth, but the length of His formal time of ministry was 3-1/2 years. The Antichrist is present during the first half of the final 7 years deceiving and misleading many, but his formal time of authority begins with the midway milestone of the Abomination of Desolation and lasts 3-1/2 years. By designating it in months, however, the text shows this to mean that it will end before the additional 45 days of the second half. Christ's 3-1/2 years began with His baptism accompanied by testimony from God the Father and God the Holy Spirit that He

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was God the Son; the Antichrist counterfeits this when Satan is thrown down to the earth and the Antichrist's declaration of being god is further testified to by the False Prophet. This initiates the time when he is granted "authority to act for forty-two months". (Rev. 13:5) Whereas Christ was inaugurated largely out of view in line with His humble character, Antichrist chooses the most public venue possible to be viewed charismatically as the eye candy of the world.

Now consider the included detail in Revelation 11:4, "These are **the two olive trees** and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth." This is especially revealing because the same term identifying the final Two Witnesses of Revelation 11 is used to also identify God's pair of servants in the course of the building of the Second Temple, Joshua and Zerubbabel.

Then the angel who was speaking with me returned and roused me, as a man who is awakened from his sleep. He said to me, "What do you see?"

*And I said, "I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it; **also two olive trees** by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left side."*

Then I said to the angel who was speaking with me saying, "What are these, my lord?"

So the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?"

And I said, "No, my lord."

Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts. 'What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"'"

Also the word of the LORD came to me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—these are the eyes of the LORD which range to and fro throughout the earth."

*Then I said to him, "What are these **two olive trees** on the right of the lampstand and on its left?"*

And I answered the second time and said to him, "What are the two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, which empty the golden oil from themselves?"

So he answered me, saying, "Do you not know what these are?"

And I said, "No, my lord."

Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who are standing by the LORD of the whole earth."

— Zechariah 4:1-14

So first and most importantly, the more we study Ezra, Haggai and Zechariah to learn about the role and activities involving the first two pair of "olive trees" in the historical Joshua and Zerubbabel, the better we will understand the final pair of "olive trees" as identified in Scripture as the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11. There is something special about these pairs as they are directly associated with having a presence in heaven before God. (Zech. 4:14)

Too many commentators have been derailed in their attempt to explain the final Two Witnesses as some kind of reincarnation or revisitation of either Moses and Elijah or Enoch and Elijah that they have missed the overt scriptural connection to Joshua and Zerubbabel. In other words, the more we study Joshua and Zerubbabel the better we will understand the Two Witnesses. They do not replay the Mount of Transfiguration at which a vision showed the presence of Moses and Elijah, but rather the events surrounding the rebuilding of the Second Temple as experienced by the literal lives of Joshua and Zerubbabel.

But notice that just as Revelation 11 begins with a command to measure the Tribulational Temple, so there is a "plumb line" in the hand of Zerubbabel, another reference to measuring something not merely physically, but spiritually.

"But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—these are the eyes of the LORD which range to and fro throughout the earth."

— Zechariah 4:10b

The meaning of "he will bring forth the top stone" in Zechariah 4:7 is that the Second Temple will measure up spiritually because it will be visited by the Messiah; the Tribulational Temple essentially fails to measure up according to this standard. But it would appear that whereas Joshua and Zerubbabel had to protect the integrity of an authentic temple authorized by God, the Two Witnesses will serve to testify **against** the counterfeit visited only by the Antichrist. Whereas previously a pair of God's servants meticulously followed His instructions to construct and operate an approved facility, the final pair will voice His displeasure and warnings against the temple of the final seven years. Inasmuch that the Second Temple was accompanied by the fact, "the prophets of God were with them supporting them", the counterfeit Tribulational Temple will be accompanied by two special prophets whose activities are characterized in Revelation 11:10, "these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth". There is a sharp spiritual contrast to this up and coming manmade temple which will not have the support of God's servants, much less the rallying confirmation of "the prophets of God".

The Hebrew Calendar

At the risk of undermining these positions which I believe are supported by Scripture, I am going to venture out to present a possible trigger associated with these End Times

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events that is not overtly stated in Scripture. This is my opinion, so please feel free to disregard this, but on the other hand don't start a cult, website or print t-shirts for this observation. And that is precisely what it is, just an observation. However, I believe it is worthy of consideration.

The modern Hebrew calendar has already been turned inside out in that the first of the year was supposed to begin with Passover, but has instead been co-opted to begin with Rosh Hashanah, which was originally a Fall event in the scriptural calendar. But at present, there are three additional major holidays added to the original seven, and I find it interesting that each of them has an Antichrist "component" or connection:

- Purim — When an Antichrist figure in Haman attempted to have all the Jews in the whole world exterminated.
- Tisha B'av — When on the same day the Temple was destroyed, first by an Antichrist Babylonian ruler, and then by an Antichrist Roman ruler.
- Hanukkah — Originally celebrating Israel's victory over the primary scriptural forerunner of the Antichrist in Antiochus Epiphanes IV, the first to commit an Abomination of Desolation.

It is interesting how many modern-day events have taken place on these dates, one of the most prominent being the ending of the Gulf War against a self-proclaimed descendant of Haman in Saddam Hussein which literally took place on Purim. And as shown in this article, there are also the activities which have taken place during the past two Hanukkahs. Notice how a special coin was minted and sold just for Purim as well.

I am not saying we can predict anything, much less set a date or time from this observation, only that I encourage Christians to pay attention to what takes place on these dates. Instead of co-opting the seven legitimate celebrations, there seems to be more than coincidental activity taking place on the three additional holidays which have been incorporated into the Hebrew calendar by man. Each of their significant connections to something/someone Antichrist just does not ring true as a mere coincidence. It may be that he who desires to replace Christ is using such to again look like the authentic by counterfeiting activities on what we might describe as a corrupted calendar. The calendar now not only includes additional holidays but is not even practiced according to the Torah.

This is another example of how the Talmud and Midrashim have usurped the authority of God's Word in modern Judaism, and at times it appears that many modern-day Jews place more importance on these three added remembrances than the seven original scriptural milestones. While I don't believe we can manipulate this into predicting future events to come on those dates, it certainly warrants paying attention to what takes place on each. And we may come to find out that this plays a role in the fulfillment of, *"he will intend to make alterations in times and in law"*. (Dan. 7:25)

Summary

As mentioned previously, the biggest problem in the First Coming is being replayed once again for the Second Coming: the literal fulfillment of biblical prophecy is either going unnoticed or rejected outright because it does not conform to presuppositions and long-held beliefs. Just as the Messiah was expected to come in a certain way and work according to their preconceived notions, the same is happening at present when it comes to the arrival of the essential figures, objects and activities of the key players in the final week of years. What is especially being overlooked is the necessary steps of

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preparation which will take place **before** the commencement of Daniel's 70th Week, which Jesus likened to "birth pangs".

There are quite a few things documented in the Gospels which provided the basis for the imminent arrival of Christ, such as the Nativity Narrative, Christ's appearance in the temple as a 12 year-old, and particularly in the preceding birth and ministry of His forerunner, John the Baptist. Much groundwork preceded Christ's formal 3-1/2-year ministry. Likewise, the same is taking place for the imminent arrival of Antichrist, albeit largely along lines counterfeiting those of Christ.

Daniel specifies that the Abomination of Desolation cannot take place without a simultaneous intervention by Antichrist of the Mosaic sacrifices. Until very recently, there were no such sacrifices to interrupt. But Scripture has already provided us with the model for rebuilding a temple in what took place in Ezra's day, whose sequence and key activities are being used to produce a satanic counterfeit. Once again, the best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture, and there is no need to speculate how prophecy will be fulfilled; the ultimate fulfillment where the Tribulational Temple is concerned is found in the precursor examples of the authentic Tabernacle and Temples. To be more candid, the final sequence of the End Times process has already begun.

Because of such, we can see how all the associated present-day activities that counterfeit the authentic whether it involves the sacrifices, the re-invigorated priesthood, or the temple itself. And whereas 20 years or so ago the only voice in Israel advocating another temple was the Temple Institute, today there are almost daily articles in Israeli news sources in which government officials are calling for "a third temple". It is a recognized issue by practically every foreign government, enemy and friend alike, and although in its embryonic stages, can be clearly recognized as preparing for the one-world religion typified by Babylon the Great, the one-world government characterized by the multi-headed beast she rides, and the public arrival of the Antichrist and False Prophet. Just as Simeon and Anna saw the infant Jesus and knew that the fulfillment of all prophecy for the First Coming was irrevocably imminent, so we have enough proof to know that Antichrist has arrived and is coming into our visual range.

At present, there is a great need for Holy Spirit-filled Christians to intensely study and compare the events and messages of Ezra, Haggai and Zechariah with an eye toward how they contribute to our understanding of what is presently taking place. It is no longer a matter of "if" but "when" in our lifetime we will witness everything realized exactly as God provided in His Word. And we must re-adjust our notions of how God's prophetic Word will be fulfilled as events unfold differently from our preconceptions. (A vivid lesson I've personally had to learn. I myself accepted so many of the errors cited in this article and have had to adjust to the reality of what is literally transpiring.)

But while we look forward to the return of Christ, no Christian should see anything positive in the appearance of Antichrist in their lifetime. There is a great spiritual test coming, and the pop quiz leading up to it is all that is prophetically unfolding at this time.

In Him,

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