



Re-Building the Temple Then & Now

Then the heads of fathers' households of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites arose, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. All those about them encouraged them with articles of silver, with gold, with goods, with cattle and with valuables, aside from all that was given as a freewill offering.

Also King Cyrus brought out the articles of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and put in the house of his gods; and Cyrus, king of Persia, had them brought out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and he counted them out to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. Now this was their number: 30 gold dishes, 1,000 silver dishes, 29 duplicates; 30 gold bowls, 410 silver bowls of a second kind and 1,000 other articles. All the articles of gold and silver numbered 5,400. Sheshbazzar brought them all up with the exiles who went up from Babylon to Jerusalem. — Ezra 1:5-11

I want to follow up January's Walk with the Word commentary (see "[Just Call Me Simeon](#)") documenting the prophetic significance of the fact that the very sacrifices which Scripture repeatedly specifies will be personally interrupted by the Antichrist (Dan. 8:1; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) were initiated in Jerusalem this past December on the last day of Hanukkah. As it turns out, there are a number of things which have already taken place which prophetically parallel how the Second Temple in Ezra's time was rebuilt which are more than mere coincidence in how they mirror what is currently taking place in what is shaping up to be what is most commonly referred to as "The Tribulational Temple"—that is, the anticipated structure in which the Abomination of Desolation will take place at the midpoint of the final week of years. A parallel sequence has already been set in motion wherein the imminent construction of the Tribulational Temple is counterfeiting that of the Second Temple; it is no longer theoretical, but actually in the process of taking place.

One of the false notions that many Christians seem to hold when it comes to the Tribulational Temple is that it is yet another center of worship authorized by God to be operated by His people Israel to glorify and worship the One True God. They look forward to it with a certain amount of glee, thinking it is going to provide authentic worship and service to God as found in the previous two temples, perhaps recapturing those times in history. While there are indisputable references to this "third" temple, it must be noted that nowhere in Scripture is it sanctioned or authorized by God. Solomon's Temple was ordained by God's Word (1 Chr. 17), Ezra's Second Temple was likewise authorized (Ezra 1), and there is what we refer to as Ezekiel's Millennial Temple yet to come. (Eze. 40-44) (This is actually the true "third" Temple.) Why is it that there is no specific divine authorization for the temple obviously present in Daniel's 70th Week?

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Whereas the three Temples authorized in Scripture are dedicated to the glory and service of God, this temporal counterfeit operates exclusively for the glory and service of Satan through the Antichrist. It is not an edifice to worship and serve the One True God, but a satanic parallel for his ends alone.

This is the chief working of Satan and his earthly counterparts in the Antichrist and False Prophet, that they counterfeit the authentic working of Christ by providing a rough parallel of biblical people, places and things. The chief difference is that they are provided in the character and setting that the world expects rather than as God authentically works. For instance, the true Messiah was born away from public view in a manger and served as the Suffering Servant, often described in the meek and mild terms of a lamb; the false messiah comes as a visibly impressive and charismatic figure whom Scripture often characterizes as both a dragon and a serpent. Satan does not provide an exact duplicate, but rather exploits similarities in the fashion that is most attractive to the fleshly lust by which the world so clearly operates and loves to see things. The saved worship in truth and Spirit; the unsaved worship a golden calf, that which appeals to their senses and expectations.

The very first presentation of the Antichrist in Daniel 2 is seen from the world's point of view as an impressive image of large stature and precious metals, very much the eye candy of the world. In Daniel 7, however, he is shown from the heavenly viewpoint for what he truly is, a disgusting beast with ill intentions and a self-serving agenda. Satan will do everything possible to present his counterfeits in the exact way the world wants to see them. Such will take the character of essential elements of the authentic, but give them a twist according to the world's notions and desires. We see this in a number of ways:

- Whereas Christ comes at the end of Daniel's 70th Week in the character of the Conquering King on the white horse, the Antichrist's initial appearance at the outset of the final week of years is the counterfeit on the white horse in the First Seal of Revelation 6:1-2.
- Whereas on the inaugural first day of Christ's 3-1/2 year ministry we see Him baptized by His forerunner John the Baptist and His divinity confirmed by both God and the Holy Spirit, the first day of the Antichrist's final 3-1/2 years is the Abomination of Desolation overseen by the False Prophet and a self-pronouncement of his deity. Whereas the Holy Spirit descended upon Christ, Satan is cast to earth and personally possesses the Antichrist.
- Although Christ cares and loves His Bride the Church and sees her safely to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and on into eternity to forever be with Him, Antichrist turns on his woman, Babylon the Great, essentially divorcing and killing her, ensuring they will forever be together in the Lake of Fire.
- Whereas Christ's kingdom is not of this world, the Antichrist's kingdom is the ultimate consolidation of **all** the kingdoms of the world under his rule.

There are many other such counterfeit parallels, but the important point is to understand that this is what is **already** currently taking place where the Tribulational Temple is concerned. Whereas we have the example in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah of the sequence and activities for rebuilding the authentic Temple of God, we

are witnessing the parallel counterfeit unfolding before us. It is no longer something to be anticipated in the future, but has already in fact begun.

First, let's look at the main highlights from the sequence of what took place when the Second Temple was constructed:

1. A divinely inspired decree is made for Israel to return from its Captivity to rebuild the Temple. (Ezra 1:1-4)
2. A freewill offering of materials was collected which would be necessary for the rebuilding of the Temple. (Ezra 1:5-6)
3. All the vessels and articles necessary for Temple operations were assembled (Ezra 1:7-11) as well as those who would return to carry out this work. (Ezra 2)
4. Upon returning to Jerusalem, the very first thing before anything else was to build an altar and resume the biblical sacrifices. (Ezra 3:1-7) It is important to note this took place even though *"the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not been laid."* (Ezra 3:6)
5. They began work on the actual Temple itself in the second year of their return (Ezra 3:8-9) and celebrated the completion of its foundation. (Ezra 3:10-13)
6. The work is interrupted by local people who have an agenda of wanting to join in the work with God's people but are excluded. (Ezra 4) As documented in parallel in Haggai and Zechariah, the Jews successfully prevent Gentile participation in the effort and work resumes (Ezra 5), albeit with further conflict and corresponding resolution before the final completion of the project. (Ezra 6).

If we survey Christian commentaries when it comes to the Tribulational Temple, although it is always highlighted by Scripture that the Abomination of Desolation takes place simultaneously with a disruption of the sacrifices, it seems to be tacitly assumed that those sacrifices simply begin when the Temple is physically restored. We seem to be missing a very visible and significant milestone of prophetic fulfillment, that they actually begin **before** the temple is built. In other words, the sequence leading up to the completion of the temple is, itself, a visible confirmation in our present time of what is about to take place in the immediate, short-term future!

By way of example, when NASA is about to launch a rocket, when did that countdown to "zero" begin? You don't really think it just began an hour or two before the actual launch, do you? For NASA, it began many **years** earlier. After the preliminary steps of getting their plans and budget approved, the countdown to that specific mission began with the recruiting of personnel and the awarding of contracts to build and assemble the hardware. There were goals and milestones for both all the personnel involved (ground and crew) as well as receiving and assembling the rocket and necessary associated equipment for the mission itself. The countdown to zero was in its final stages **months** before as the rocket was assembled and transported to the launching pad and the crew given their final examinations and finally taking their seats in the Shuttle. As civilian onlookers, we only become aware of the last few minutes of this years' long countdown because we were finally paying attention to the very end of the process when it all comes together and blasts off. But that final event was the inevitable

conclusion to a much longer sequence which began **years** before liftoff. The launch date was a foregone conclusion because of the years of activity leading up to it.

Likewise, the inevitable realization of the Tribulational Temple has already begun, and it is a mistake to focus only on the “launch pad” of the Abomination of Desolation. We are in the early stages where the personnel and things necessary for its fulfillment are already being assembled. Just as the decree and work to gather the people and resources necessary inevitably concluded in the following years with the Second Temple, so the process has already begun to inescapably experience the Tribulational Temple irrevocably now established before us. The only difference is that the current activities and sequence is counterfeiting what took place previously:

- Whereas the authentic Temple was initiated by a divine decree which gave direction to everyone, Jew and Gentile alike where God’s purpose was concerned, there is a Satanic counterfeit we know to be coming which will unite everyone on a worldly level. This temple does not come about at God’s direction, but in spite of it, and as the result of a worldly negotiation.
- Just as in the case of the authentic Temple when the vessels and things necessary were first gathered together, so the Temple Institute, for the past several years, has already manufactured everything necessary to resume temple operations. Such have been on display and even used recently in the resumption of sacrifices and priestly celebrations for Passover, Hanukkah and Purim. They even have the building blocks for the temple itself ready to be assembled.
- First the altar was erected and the sacrifices resumed in the case of the authentic Temple; likewise the altar the Temple Institute as provided for their temple has been set up and many of the sacrifices resumed or enacted as deemed possible. Notice how it erratically counterfeits the authentic. They have even designated priests who have dressed in priestly attire and publicly carried out rituals in the shadow of the Temple Mount.
- Whereas God’s people had to prevent the participation of Gentile non-believers so as to stave off the inevitable corruption which would follow by those who worshipped other gods, the nascent Sanhedrin has sent out a call to all the nations to come and participate in the building and operation of this temple. They have even minted coins for the temple tax with Gentile figures on them such as President Trump and accept donations from anyone. The authentic is a centerpiece for authentic believers, the counterfeit a magnet for everyone no matter what they believe.
- Whereas there was a purification process which had to be undertaken to ensure that an ordained, sanctified priesthood would conduct proper worship and service, the Temple Institute in conjunction with the reconstituted Sanhedrin are designating who is qualified based on their own standards.

In other words, just as the work on the authentic Temple of God began in Ezra’s day, the Satanic counterfeit has already taken material form in our day. Just as it inevitably concluded in the actual construction of that Temple, so is the unavoidable realization of this temple. The main difference is that although the authentic came about by the move of God, this earthly counterfeit is mustering momentum so that the world will join

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together to accomplish it on their own initiative. It is a very weird parallel to the Tower of Babel in that it is an attempted achievement by man animated by the designs of Satan.

It is no longer a question of “if” or even “when”, but rather, “How much longer?”

In Him,

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