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There is much said about the end of time and the events associated with it. Many believe that there will be a rapture of the righteous followed by seven years of tribulation. In the midst of those seven years, the Jew will return to Israel and rebuild the temple. The latter half of those tribulation years, there will be the battle of Armageddon after which Jesus will return, defeat the wicked and provide a thousand years of peace on earth as he rules in earthly Israel. Last week we discussed the second coming of Jesus and the rapture. Today we will look at the rebuilding of the temple.

Hal Lindsey stated that the rebuilding of the temple was the biggest issue in Bible prophecy. That means he ranks it right up on top of the prophecy list. Lindsey is not the only one with this view. On the eve of the year 2000, many expected the world to end at the beginning of the new millennium. Newsweek, Nov 1, 1999 issue is all about Biblical prophecy of today. On page 73 is written, *“The predominant emphasis on Christian prophecy today is the returning of the Jews to the Holy Land and the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple.”*

In a later book, Planet Earth 2000 AD, Hal Lindsey deals with today's prophecies. Chapter 9 is entitled, **“The Rush to Rebuild the Temple.”** In that chapter Lindsey says, *“The single most important key to prophesy yet to be fulfilled involves the rebuilding of the temple.”* Later he writes, *“It is this temple mount in Jerusalem that will serve as center stage for the final count down to Armageddon.”* Saying this is the most important event from which the end of the world will come is a pretty bold statement.

This rebuilding is sometimes referred to as the “third temple” because it was destroyed on two previous occasions. The first destruction was by the Babylonians about 600BC but was rebuilt about 70 years later. The Roman army, led by Titus, about 70AD destroyed the city of Jerusalem, including this temple. This invasion and destruction was so devastating that the nation of Israel did not exist again until the May 14, 1948. So recent prophecy is centered on the rebuilding of the temple a third time.

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Steve Wholberg in his seminar regarding prophecies of Israel presented a book entitled The Edge of Time written by Peter and Patti Lalonde. Peter Lalonde is CEO of Cloud Ten Productions that produces “end of time” movies, including the movie “Left Behind.” Their influence literally reaches hundreds of thousands of people. On the cover of their book underneath the title says, “*The final countdown has begun.*” The title of chapter three is “*The Third Temple*”. The first sentence of that chapter says, “*One of the most dramatic prophecies concerns Israel which is still to be fulfilled, concerns the building of the third temple.*” They are claiming that one of the most dramatic Bible prophecies concerns the rebuilding of the temple. Not only do they make such claims, people are listening.

There is two basic scripture text they use to support their teaching of the temple being built in Jerusalem a third time. These scriptures are Daniel 9:27, and 2 Thes 2:4

(Dan 9:27 KJV) And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation (the offering of a gift or sacrifice to a deity) to cease...

The prem. understanding of this verse is that the “he” is the Antichrist and the “one week” (7 days) represents seven years. In the midst of those seven years, the sacrificial system will cease. But for it to cease, it must first begin – so for that to happen, the Jews must rebuild the temple and then reinstate that old Mosaical system of temple worship and sacrifice.

Hal Lindsey on page 56-57 of Late Great Planet Earth references to Daniel 9:27 when he says the “HE” in the verse is the Antichrist and that he will make a covenant with the Jews during the seven years of tribulation. During which time, he will cause the sacrifice and the oblation (offering) to cease. For the sacrificial system to cease, it is assumed they first must exist, therefore, the temple has to be rebuilt to support such a sacrificial system. Lindsey says on page 55,

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“There remains but one more event to completely set the stage for Israel’s part in the last great act of her historical drama. This is to rebuild the ancient Temple of worship upon its old site. There is only one place that this Temple can be built, according to the Law of Moses. This is upon Mount Mariah.”

Let’s think about reinstating that ole sacrificial system. Why would anyone want to do that? The Lord certainly wouldn’t. Hebrews 8:7 tells us that that old system had faults which was why a better covenant (i.e. the Law of Christ) was provided. Heb 10:4 tells us that that blood of bulls and goats could not forgive sin. Jesus died on the cross to take away that old system. Why would the Lord expect man to go back and install an inferior system that had its flaws in the place of an improved system that could offer salvation? This interpretation of Daniel 9:27 falls short in human logic. Question: Is there any other possible meaning for Daniel 9:27

Let me offer another consideration that is totally consistent with other scriptures. I suggest that the HE is not the Antichrist at all, but rather Jesus Christ. This prophecy is foretelling of events around the death of Jesus. The ONE WEEK (i.e. seven days) predicts a 7 year period between 30AD-37AD. This period begins with the baptism of Jesus, which launched His earthly ministry and concludes, with the conversion of Cornelius which launched to evangelistic thrust of the church to the Gentile.

Also, Daniel 9:27 says, in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. Jesus accomplish this, by His death on the cross. This death occurred right in the middle of this seven-year period mentioned by Daniel. At the point of Jesus Christ death, the old sacrificial system became of no value in the sight of God. It was through the death of Jesus and the established of the new covenant that the sacrificial system ceased (Col.2:14), not by some future person acclaimed to be the Antichrist but by Jesus Christ himself.

Notice also some verses from the book of Hebrews on this subject. First notice (**Heb 8:6 KJV**) *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he*

is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. (7) For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. We learn from these verses that Jesus was to establish a better covenant because the first had faults. The biggest fault was that it could not forgive sins (Heb 10:3-4). Question: Why would one want to go back and reestablish that system?

The first covenant and its sacrificial system had served its purpose and was now outdated. Read (*Heb 8:13 KJV*) *In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*

Jesus became to ultimate sacrifice by establishing a covenant in which sin could be forgiven. The sacrifice of Jesus is the final sacrifice. Look at. (*Heb 10:9 KJV*) *Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. (10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

Question. If the temple is rebuilt as many teach and hope, what is the message they are sending back to God? The Hebrew writer teaches us that it was God's will to replace the sacrificial system with Christ's law. If we reestablish to old Mosaic system, in effect we are reverting back to a system that God gave his Son to replace. It makes no sense to consider such a teaching.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:2-4:

Another proof text used to support the idea of an earthly temple being established on Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem is found in 2 Thessalonians 2:2-4. (2) *That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by the spirit, nor by the word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. (3) Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of partition; (4) Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*

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V. 3 talks of “the son of perdition” to whom many refer to as the “antichrist.” Granted, this is talking about one that is against Christ. These verses also talk of an apostasy, a falling away. Most Bible scholars agree, including John Calvin, Martin Luther, and John Wesley, that this falling away was fulfilled by the church of Rome.

Notice verse 4. This is the key verse. This verse is being preached by most modern day prophecies as proof that the Jewish temple will be rebuilt again on Mount Moriah of Jerusalem. They quote the verse as saying the “*antichrist will call himself God and he will sit in the temple of God showing himself to be God.*” If this antichrist, yet to be identified, is to sit in the temple, then obviously there must be a rebuilding of the temple. Movies have been released with such a theme. The movie *Apocalypse* and another called *Revelation* showed an actor portraying the Antichrist and he walks right inside the temple and sits down on the throne of the temple and declares himself to be God. This, in the mind of many is how this prophecy in 2 Thes 2:4 is going to be fulfilled. This is the common view being taught around the world today of this verse.

Hal Lindsey in *The Late Great Planet Earth* (pg 98) said, “*The antichrist will proclaim himself to be God. He will establish himself in the temple of God (2 Thes. 2:4).*” “Then he says, “*There is only one place where this temple of God can be and that is on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem.*” Hal Lindsey is saying that the fulfillment of the verse must be in the temple thus the temple has to be rebuilt.

Question: Is this what the Apostle Paul was teaching? Look at verse 4 again. It says this antichrist *opposeth and exalteth himself* and *is called God* (apparently by others and not of himself claiming to be God) and *sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* From this verse, many conclude that there is going to be a person to walk right into the temple and claim to be God just as the movies reveal. Does this text say anything about anybody walking into a temple and saying “*I am God.*” No, it says he will “sit as God” in the temple and will “show himself as God.” By his actions, he presents himself as to be a God.

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The text states that this event is going to happen inside the temple of God. The Greek word for temple is *naos*. Now if we can define what the temple of God is, then that would go a long way in helping us understand this passage. What is the temple of God? Since Paul wrote the book of 2 Thessolonians, let's let Paul define the temple of God for us. Look at 1 Cor 1:2. This verse teaches us that the book of 1 Corinthians was written *unto the church of God which is at Corinth*. Now read 1 Cor 3:16 and note that it says *know ye not that ye are the temple of God...* The same Greek word *naos* is used and Paul says that temple is "ye", which chapter 1:2 defines as being the church of God. The church is the temple of God into which the son of partition is going to enter. So when this attack against Christ goes into the temple of God, it is going into the church of God. There is going to be an apostasy within the church.

Now think about it. If you were Satan, would you spend your time trying to recruit converts in a bar or would you try to walk into the church, get behind a pulpit and preach a sermon that would spread deception into Christianity? The son of perdition here mentioned is some usurper of God's authority in the church. They in essence claim to be God by discounting God's commands and follow their own commands – they are false teachers. And certainly this has proven to be the case during the Christian age.

But God's commands are clear when it comes to the matter of salvation. God expects you to "obey the gospel." ***Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.***

Will you come?