

Jesus Christ, Jerusalem, and the Temple

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I have friends who have expressed their concern about the newer English translations of the Bible. They are concerned that people reading these new translations might be influenced to abandon the truth.

Eternity will show that it is not the 1978 NIV which has taken the church into error, but another Bible which was printed in 1917, the year the U.S. entered World War 1. That Bible was The Scofield Reference Bible.

My friends who hate the word “revised” should stop to realize that the word “revised” applies to the Scofield Bible as much or more than to any other Bible ever published. Scofield “revised” the Bible by inserting his personal notes in and around the actual text. He radically changed the teachings of Jesus and His Apostles with these notes.

Today I want to zero in on what Jesus taught about the Jewish people, their capital city of Jerusalem, and their temple.

- **Matthew 23:37-39** *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’”*

Preceding these words, Jesus had said that He was going to send still more prophets to Jerusalem, but that they would do the same thing again “.... **some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, Matthew 23:34**

Prophet after prophet had been sent to that city and each of them had been despised and mistreated.

Jesus finished this discourse against the Jews with these shocking words:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"
Matthew 23:37-39

With these words Jesus clearly said that He was closing the door to the unbelieving masses of Jerusalem.

Some preachers have tried to jettison the last phrase of the passage quoted above into the 21st century. In doing so they suggest that a day will come when the Jewish people as a whole will proclaim Jesus as "Blessed", but that is not the meaning at all. Jesus is simply saying that the only way to see the Son is to profess Him as the Messiah.

There is no promise in this verse that some day, in some other way, God is going to save one complete race of people.

- ***Matthew 21:33-46*** ***"Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:***

***' The stone which the builders rejected
 Has become the chief cornerstone.
 This was the LORD's doing,
 And it is marvelous in our eyes?'***

"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. And whoever falls on

this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.” Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

There is a modern day fascination with the City of Jerusalem. It is even called “The Holy City” and Israel “The Holy Land”. The truth is that Jesus described that nation as murderous vinedressers. Jesus told His disciples to leave Jerusalem and go to the ends of the earth with the Gospel. Jesus told His disciples that outside of Israel, in the Gentile nations, they would find people willing to receive the Son and bear fruit for Him.

- ***“...Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” Matthew 24:2***

Never forget that Jesus is not only our Savior, but also The Great Prophet of God. Jesus knows what is in the future.

When Jesus was speaking these words recorded in Matthew 24, Jerusalem was a grand and glorious city. Among its grand structures was the Jerusalem Temple; the Temple that Jesus Himself had come to.

Jesus’ disciples were fascinated with the grand building of Jerusalem and said so **Matthew 24:1**, but in response to this admiration Jesus said, ***“...Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” Matthew 24:2***

This is an amazing prophecy; Especially in the light of Jesus dating it by saying, ***Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place Matthew 24:34***

I have often heard men try to make the phrase “This generation” to mean something other than the generation of people Jesus was speaking to. We reject such a notion and always allow Scripture to interpret Scripture.

Matthew records Jesus using the phrase “This generation” on three other occasions. In each and every case Jesus was referring to the people he was talking to.

Matthew 11:16-19

Matthew 12:40-42

Matthew 23:29-38

What Jesus prophesied in **Matthew 24:2** happened in 70 AD when Roman armies invaded Israel and completely destroyed Jerusalem and its temple.

Josephus was there. He witnessed the destruction and said that where their was once a city only desert remained.

*I do not understand this modern day fascination
with a piece of real estate that Jesus cursed.*

- **Matthew 24:15-22** *“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.*

There is another prophecy associated with the destruction of the Temple which is often passed over.

Matthew 24:23-25 *“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand.*

Jesus prophesied that even as the Roman armies were invading the city there would be false prophets.

Josephus mentions these false prophets. He said that these false prophets predicted that God would not allow the temple to be destroyed, and encouraged everyone to flee to the Temple

**When God moves in judgment
the only safe place is in the arms of Jesus Christ
No building can be relied on
No real estate is safe**

- ***Matthew 24:14*** ***And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.***

If there was going to be a “rapture” followed by a 7 year tribulation, this would have been a good place for Jesus to mention it, but He did not. What He said was “***...and then the end will come.***”

If a thousand years was going to be tacked on at the end of this age, this would have been an ideal place for Jesus to mention it, but He did not. What He said was, “***...and then the end will come.***”

If another Temple was going to replace the one Jesus was talking about, this would have been a good time to mention it, but He did not. What He said was, “***...and then the end will come.***”

There are a number of prophecy teachers today teaching people that we should be looking for a rapture. **Jesus told us to expect a resurrection.**

There are a number of prophecy teachers today teaching people to watch for a new Temple. **Jesus taught us to watch for a returning Son.**

There are a number of prophecy teachers today teaching that the end of the Gospel age will usher in another period of time in which sinners who are “Left Behind” will have a second chance. Jesus said, “***... this gospel of the***

kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” Matthew 24:14

You may think that you will have a second chance to repent and believe, but it is not coming.

This is the last age. Now the Gospel door is open, but a day is coming when God will close it, “***...and then the end will come.***”