

Mount Moriah

We know about the problems that are going on throughout the world especially with Israel and the difficulties in the Gaza strip and also in their northern sector with Lebanon.

We can sometimes lose focus on the Word of God and keep our eyes just on all the problem areas. These areas are all important to the end time plans of God. However, as true believers, we must be careful not to get so caught up with the “signs of times” that we set our attention on those things and not on the full Word of God.

I am not saying those things are not important – they are very important. However, we should not get so involved with those things that we lose focus on the full Word of God and how everything that is happening are all things that God said would happen as a pre-cursor to the end times that are still to shortly come. The important areas are those areas that we need to always keep in our minds. The things that are happening now are happening for a reason – they are all part of God’s end time plan.

We must never forget that God has a plan...and it is coming to pass. Having said that, I would like to turn our attention to something that the Lord has placed in His Word that we sometimes overlook in these end of times. What I am referring to is the mountain of the Lord where His holy Temple was actually built and upon that same mountain - it will be built again.

We all have heard of Mt. Moriah. We know that it is one of the two mountains on which Jerusalem stands. The other is Mt Zion. Mt Zion is where David made his dwelling when he was king over Israel. However, Mt. Moriah was the place where the Temple was actually built. The Temple was destroyed in 70AD as declared by the prophets and by Jesus. However, it will be there again when Jesus returns. Therefore, it is a most important place to all true believers. Let us take a quick look at the history of Mt. Moriah as given to us in the scriptures.

First, let us take a look at what the word “Moriah” means in the scriptures. It literally means “chosen by Yahweh.” It comes from two Hebrew words: *rā’â* pronounced *raw-aw’* which means “to give attention or to look to as your source” and *yâ* pronounced *yaw* which literally means God’s name – Yahweh. Therefore, Mount Moriah points to Yahweh. It is telling us that only God is our true source of life, new life, that is given to all believers through Jesus.

The first time we read of Mount Moriah in the scriptures concerns a very important act that was done by God as seen in Genesis 22. We read Genesis 22:22 that God said to Abraham, *“...Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou loves, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”* This is an interesting statement that God gives to Abraham.

We must remember that Abraham is about 110-112 years old. He has been through a lot to have this son. Now God tells him that he is to go and sacrifice his son. We see that Abraham, in total faith, does what God tells him to do. If we know anything about Abraham's life we can now tell that he has grown in his walk with God and has learned to simply obey God. This is something we all need to learn. Hmmm.....

Abraham and Isaac go to this mountain called Moriah. Notice in Genesis 22:6 that when they both went to go up to the mountain, Isaac was “carrying the wood” on his back just as Jesus would carry his cross. It was at this time that God was not only showing Abraham but He continually shows all of us today what His plan of salvation for the world would be.

Isaac represents all of us today. We all should carry our cross and die for all our sins. However, we see in Genesis 22:13 that God had provided *“a ram caught in the thicket.”* Abraham said previously that God would provide the *“lamb for the sacrifice.”* Abraham believed God and God now provided the substitute for Isaac. This is exactly what God did for all creation through Jesus.

In this teaching of Abraham, God provided a substitute ram caught in a thicket nearby and Abraham did not have to literally sacrifice his only, beloved son, Isaac – but God did, for you and I. Let us read what God tells Abraham in Genesis 22:12-13, *“And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fear God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering **instead** of his son.”*

Yes, God provided a sacrifice instead of Isaac. Why? It was because God loves His people. He wanted to show Abraham that because of that love, God would provide a substitute for every person. The substitute would be God's only son – Jesus!!!



Genesis 22:14 tells us, “So, Abraham called that place *The LORD Will Provide*. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.” Yes, on that mountain God “would provide.” God would provide the final sacrifice for the sins of all men. He would provide that “*ram who was caught in the thickets*.” He would provide His only begotten Son – Jesus!!! Yes, Jesus was caught in the “midst of the thickets,” the sin of the world.

Remember, however, where this took place. It all took place on Mt Moriah as a pre-cursor to what Jesus would do for all of us. This would be the place for God to do His will to set man free. But...there is more to Mount Moriah.

We then see, many, many years later that the Ark of the Covenant was taken from the children of Israel by the Philistines. Without going through the whole story, we know that it made its way back into Israel but it was at Kirjath-jearim in the house of Abinadab. It never returned to the Tabernacle. There it stayed for many years until David became king of Israel.

David then brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. It was situated on Mount Zion in a tent that became known as the “Tabernacle of David.” There, a new form of worship was established by David. He brought forth instruments and they worshiped God by bringing in food and supplies to help those who were in need. It was a little later on that we read in 1Chronicles 17:1, that king David then got the idea to build a Temple for the Lord.

David purchases the “*threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite*” where David will now build this Temple. However, and this is **most important**, we see in 1Chronicles 17:3-15 that it was never God’s plan for a Temple to be built. He sends the prophet Nathan to tell David this. However, David insisted on this “plan” and God ultimately relented to David’s desire to build Him a Temple. God’s plan for His true dwelling place would be in the hearts of His people.

In 1Chronicles 28:2 David declares the plan to build the Temple on Mt Moriah. He tells the people that He will not build it because he was “a man of war” but his son Solomon, the next king (1Chronicles 28:6), would build it. David would get the materials together to build it.

We read in 2Chronicles 3:1, *“Then Solomon began to build the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David. It was on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, the place provided by David.”* The House of God, the Temple, was built by Solomon. However, as we all know, many years later and after many problems by the people, it was conquered and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians.



The area laid barren and abandoned for 70 years. In a miraculous move of God, the Persians came into power by defeating the Babylonians. The Jewish people were allowed to go back to Israel and ultimately Jerusalem, and rebuild their Temple as we see in Ezra, Nehemiah and Zechariah. It was a smaller version. However, the people did rejoice when the structure was rebuilt.

We then see in the Bible and in history books, war persisted for the next 400 years. The Bible remains “silent” about this time period. The Temple was there but the Ark of the Covenant was never returned to it. Finally, the Romans came into power and took over Israel and Jerusalem.

It was at this time that the half-Israeli and half-Idumean king Herod was allowed to rule over Israel as a “proxy king” for the Romans. However, he was under the control and rule of the Roman government. It was during this time that king Herod, who was a master builder (even though he was a nut), decided to build and expand the Temple to a greater extent than it was.

He built it to where we see it in the Gospel accounts, Jesus went to visit it. It was a grand and elaborate area. However, we must not forget that the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of the presence of God, was never found nor was it ever put back into the Temple. It was taken away during the time of Jeremiah, never to be found again (unless you believe the story of Indiana Jones).

That brings us to the time of Jesus. In His final week on this earth Jesus entered through the “Golden Gate” of the Temple on a donkey/colt. He did not come this first time as the “King of all kings.” He came this first time as a “humble servant” to die for the sins of all people. Those who believed in the coming of Messiah and all those who would believe in Him after His death and resurrection would be “saved” and become “born-again.” This includes you and I.

Pilate, heeding the call of the Jewish leaders and their own people who were at the trial and who wanted Jesus killed, handed him over to be crucified. The soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, Jesus went out to the place of “the Skull” (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). There they crucified him with him two others – one on each side and Jesus in the middle. (John 19:16-18) Scholars believe that somewhere on the north side of Mount Moriah is the place where Jesus was sacrificed on the cross for the sins of the world – Golgotha.

The Good News is that Jesus rose from the grave. The Good News to all believers, including all of us today is that Jesus will return to this same area on Mount Moriah, where the Temple stood originally and where it will stand again, to rule and reign on this earth for 1000 years.

The doctrine of the Second Coming or Advent of Jesus Christ refers to the future return of the Messiah, the King of kings and Lord of lords, to earth at the end of the age. His return will be visible to all as He physically comes down from heaven “in the clouds” riding on a horse to bring salvation to all His people and final judgment to all those who choose to deny Him.

It is often associated with or referred to as “the great day of the Lord” in the Old Testament. It corresponds to all of the messianic prophecies anticipating Messiah coming as the King of kings in victory and in all His glory to triumph over all the enemies of God and his people.

When Jesus returns and after His monumental victory over the attacking nations at Armageddon, Jesus will stand on a specific location. The Bible seems to indicate that the exact location of Jesus before entering Jerusalem will be on the Mount of Olives which is directly across from Mount Moriah. Zechariah 14:4 states, “*On that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south.*”

The Mount of Olives is a fitting place for Jesus to return. Not only will He be standing on the very mountain where He preached His last message to His disciples, but it is also the place where He then ascended into heaven. (Acts 1:1–10). It is also the area where Jesus began His first trip into Jerusalem on a donkey/colt on that “Palm Sunday” as the “humble servant of God.” Now, He will come and return to that mount, the Mount of Olives, to enter into Jerusalem as the “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

We must remember that Jesus never taught the idea or concept that the Jewish Temple would become obsolete because of Him. He said it would be torn down, which it was in 70 AD by the Roman army under Titus. However, that does not mean that it would not be rebuilt one day. For from that time until the time we are in today, it is considered the “time of the Gentiles.” However, the “time of the Gentiles” will come to an end, which means that there will be a renewal of the Jewish aspect because God desires to give them one last attempt at believing in their Messiah, Jesus. Therefore, a “third temple” will be re-established.

The timing of that “third temple” is up to discussion among Bible scholars and believers in God and His Word. That has caused much discussion. Many believe that the “third temple” will be when Jesus comes back to rule and reign on this earth for the millennial. In whatever timing it may be in, we know that it will be built and that there will be “sacrifices” that will be allowed in that Temple. We read of this in Ezekiel.

We also know, through the Word, that the “anti-christ” will allow sacrifices by the Jewish people on the Temple Mount for the first 3½ years of his rule. But..... then he will rise up for who he really is and he will stop all other worship, including the Jewish worship, and force all the people to worship him.

This means that the “third temple” could be up and running prior to Jesus second coming. After all is said and done and Jesus comes and defeats the “anti-christ” and his “cohorts,” Jesus will then come and take His place upon His throne in His Temple which will be on Mt. Moriah. As stated, Jesus will come first and step on the Mount of Olives and the ground will separate opening up for Him to go through the original “Golden Gate” of the Temple Mount.

The “Golden Gate” that was buried for all these years will now be opened. Jesus will go through that “Golden Gate” where He came through the first time riding upon a donkey as the “humble servant.” However, now, this time, He will go through that “Golden Gate” and take His place as the true “King of kings and Lord of lords” upon this earth.

I think, and this is simply my thoughts, that the Jewish sacrifices will still be allowed by Jesus in that third temple in the millennial which means that there will be Jewish people who will be allowed to do those sacrifices as seen in Ezekiel. The purpose in allowing those sacrifices, I surmise, is to give the Jewish people who survived Armageddon and the end times who are now living in the millennial period, an opportunity to see the true Messiah – Jesus. He will be right there.

Will they believe that Jesus was the “final sacrifice” or will they choose not to believe and “still be waiting” for their Messiah to come, thereby still doing their sacrifices. Of course, as we read in the scriptures, there will also be the “Gentiles” who will come to the Temple area.

They all, Jew and Gentile, will have to make the decision to believe in Jesus or not. This will be their **final** opportunity. They must make the choice to believe that Jesus was, is and always will be the “final sacrifice” and that there is no longer any need for any other sacrifice. That is how much God desires none to perish. If they do not see it and believe, then when the millennial concludes, their fate will be sealed – they have made their choice.

We know that when the millennial concludes, heaven and earth, as we know it or think of it today, will be done away with and we will see the “New Jerusalem” coming forth. (Revelation 21:2) This will be the final place for all true believers. Unfortunately, all non-believers, Jew and Gentile, male and female, will end up in the “Lake of Fire,” as will all the forces of darkness.

It may have seemed as if these things may never take place or if it does that it will be a long way off from now. However, if we look back over the last 50 years it seems as though everything has sped up and many prophetic areas of the beginning of the end times has or is now occurring. Yes, things are “speeding up.” God is moving and His Word will surely come to pass. We must never forget about Mount Moriah and the things that have taken place and will take place there. It will be the place where Jesus will come again and rule this earth from.

The most important thing for all His true believers is that they do not get caught up and fall victim to the snares of the enemy as all of the end time “events” take place. The most important thing is to be aware of these “signs of the times.” We must prepare our own hearts and be ready for whenever Jesus does come. We must be on the alert to tell our loved ones and as many other people as we can about the coming of Jesus and that they need to turn and accept Jesus as their own personal Savior and Lord.

In every generation, from the time that Jesus left this earth to now, the “sign of the times” has always pointed to Jesus’ imminent return. These days are no different. Whether He is coming back in our time or not, it does not matter. We, as those who truly worship the Father and who truly believe in Jesus as our Savior and Lord and who are being led by His Holy Spirit, must go forth and live out our lives as true believers in Jesus Christ. We are called and therefore we must go and tell others about Jesus who is the way to the One and only living God.

The time may be short or not but the message is always the same. As it tells us in Matthew 28:19-20, we must, *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*