

THE BATTLE FOR THE TEMPLE MOUNT

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THE WRITING ON THE WALL

There's a lot of "writing on the wall" these days; and it's not meaningless graffiti. It hi-lights signs of the endtime prophetic scenario. Some of the current signs ...

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And there's much more.

“But when these things begin to take place, straighten yourselves and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” (Luke 21:28)

The coming of the Master is at hand. My dear reader, let's redeem the time!

ISRAEL'S NEW LEADER

ARIEL SHARON - A TOUGH WAR HORSE

As expected, the 72-year-old former general, Ariel Sharon, was voted to power by an Israeli electorate that was demanding a strong hand to handle the Palestinian uprising.

Until the intifada began last September, Israelis believed that Ehud Barak was tying the last knots of a comprehensive peace package with Yasser Arafat that would finally bring peace to the land. The Jews were quite alarmed at the concessions Barak was offering Yasser Arafat at the Camp David summit, and they were stunned when the Palestinians pocketed Barak's concessions, and yet refused to budge on their demands. Instead of signing a peace deal, the Palestinians resorted to an intifada, with shooting and bombings, to achieve their demands.

It was transparent for all to see, Barak's concessions did nothing to appease Yasser Arafat. They did not produce peace, but rather, jeopardized Israel's security.

Israelis know that the nation's survival rests on two things;

1. Its deterrent image and the military power behind it; and,
2. Arab realization that Israel will use that power if tested.

Barak's "soft glove" response to the Intifada (for fear of jeopardizing his peace prospects), hurt Israel's deterrent image badly, and his sacrifice of security, in his and Bill Clinton's desperate hope for peace, brought about his downfall.

60% of Israelis believe the peace process should continue, but **security** is their concern. They want to carry out negotiations from a position of strength. They believe that only a strong hand can bring peace in Israel. So they have turned to a man with a tough reputation, believing he is the man for this hour.

In his victory speech, Ariel Sharon declared, "Citizens, the state of Israel has embarked on a new path of security and harmony."

One of his first "duties" was to visit the Western (Wailing) Wall, and to read Scriptures there. Then in a triumphant mood, he said, "I am visiting Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish people for the past 3000 years and the united and indivisible capital of Israel, with the temple at its centre, for all eternity."

Some analysts say Sharon's election killed the peace process. Sharon, in fact, was elected because the peace process was already effectually dead. But his landslide victory, along with his statements and past reputation, did generate fears in many parts of the world that a major world war is in the making.

Bitter rhetoric throughout the Arab world decried Sharon as a war criminal. Syria's ruling Baath Party's newspaper, *al-Baath*, thundered, "The victory of the bloody terrorist and war criminal Sharon is a clear message by the Zionist entity to Arabs amounting to an official declaration of war."

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, chief of Hamas in Gaza, said talks were futile. "The Palestinian Authority has to get rid of the dirt of the Oslo peace accords and stick to resistance."

In Iraq, Saddam Hussein has, for months, been sabre-rattling, calling for war against Israel. He is attempting to restore his respectability in the Muslim world by championing the Palestinians. Since the beginning of the intifada he has amassed several divisions close to the Syrian border, and said recently that if Syria and Jordan permit his army access to their borders with Israel, he could bring the Jewish state to its knees in six months.

ARIEL'S BACKGROUND

Ariel Sharon was born to Russian immigrants in British-ruled Palestine, and all his life he has been doing battle with Arabs.

As a young soldier he fought for Israel's creation in 1948. He commanded armoured divisions in the Arab-Israel wars of 1967 and 1973. As Defence Minister in 1982, he led Israel into war in Lebanon, during which time he oversaw the slaughter in Palestinian refugee camps in south Lebanon - an episode that later forced him to resign from his position. It is this massacre that has given Sharon such a bad reputation with the Arabs. (The reason for Israel's invasion of south Lebanon was to put an end to the PLO's reign of terror, and its attacks on Israel.)

Mr Sharon made a comeback into politics, and is credited with forging the Likud party into a strong political force. And now, in a time of threat to the nation, the majority of Israelis have decided Sharon is the man to provide security, if not peace.

Many Arab commentators expect the peace process will be frozen, and that violence in the occupied territories will increase.

COALITION BUILDING

Sharon's immediate task is to put together a coalition government. The Feb. 6 election chose only the Prime Minister; the Knesset remained unchanged; and it is highly fragmented.

Ariel Sharon's Likud party is one of the three major parties (along with Labor and the ultra-orthodox Shas). But as no party has a majority in the Knesset, Sharon is in the same unenviable and unstable political position as Netanyahu and Barak were - at the mercy and demands of other parties.

Although Mr Sharon is thoroughly secular and does not observe Sabbath or wear a skull cap, and becomes irritated by religious laws and interference, the ultra-orthodox communities supported his election. But the largest religious party, Shas, with its heavy demands, is more of a hindrance than a help.

So Sharon is seeking to form a broad-based "government of unity." He first invited Ehud Barak and the Labor party to join him, and then also, several other smaller parties. In fact, Israel desperately needs a strong, united government in these crucial times. (It also desperately needs Y'shua the Messiah!)

If he is not able to maintain a broad-based coalition, Sharon's government will not survive for long; then new elections!

SHARON'S "PEACE" PLANS

Sharon has repeatedly stated that he wants peace with the Palestinians, but only on his terms. During his campaign, he acknowledged that the peace he is seeking will involve "painful compromises." His peace plan involves ...

- * a long-term interim non-belligerency arrangement
- * a separation of Israeli and Palestinian societies
- * the establishment of a Palestinian state in the 42% of the West Bank they now control
- * Protection of Israel's security interests
- * no evacuation of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. (Sharon helped to create most of the settlements while he was the minister of agriculture, and later as the minister of housing and minister of infrastructure).
- * no relinquishing of Israel's sovereignty over East Jerusalem. Sharon has said he would not give the Palestinians control over any part of Jerusalem or the strategic Jordan Valley.
- * no return of Palestinian refugees to their original areas of settlement within Israel
- * further territorial concessions would be left to the distant future

In an interview before the election, Sharon said he would honour the peace agreements Israel signed over the past seven years, and would not try to reoccupy territory that had been turned over to the Palestinians. But he said he would refuse to honour any agreement the Knesset had not confirmed.

Since the election he has stated that he would not recommence peace negotiations where Barak left off at Taba in January.

WHAT'S AHEAD?

Many believe a hardliner like Ariel Sharon will be incapable of making peace. It can be said that Yasser Arafat also, is incapable of making peace. Arafat certainly cannot get a good enough deal to satisfy radical Palestinians and Arabs who want Israel to self-destruct. Arafat simply does not have a mandate to compromise on his oft-repeated maximalist demands. But Sharon may be the Israeli leader that Arafat really wants. He may goad Arab radicals, including Saddam Hussein, into declaring a *jihad* - a holy war- against the despised Jewish state.

One thing is sure, the Day of Jacob's Trouble is near!

"Ahh! For that day is great; there is none like it; and it is the time of Jacob's distress, but he will be saved out of it." (Jeremiah 30:7)

"And I will bring this third through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My Name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'YHWH is my God'." (Zechariah 13:9)

Time is fast running out for the world!



THE TEMPLE MOUNT and the AL-AQSA INTIFADA

The news media has spread the belief that the current “Al-Aqsa Intifada” in Israel began when Likud leader, Ariel Sharon, visited the Temple Mount on Sept 28 last year.

What has not been publicised is that Sharon went to the Mount to investigate the deliberate destruction of ancient Jewish archeological artifacts which provide physical evidence to support Judaism’s historical claims to the Temple Mount. Sharon went there to bring this desecration to the attention of Ehud Barak’s government.

For several years the Temple Mount has been undergoing a process of Islamisation. Solomon’s Stables has been turned into a vast underground mosque. Ornamental skylights of metal and glass have been installed in the floor over the area where the underground mosque has been established.

Last May, reports began to expose the widespread digging by the Muslim Waqf which controls the Temple Mount. Huge piles of debris were removed by heavy equipment and dumped in the east of the old city, and in the Kidron valley.

The Israel Archeological Association says this rubble included a large stone fragment that was part of the Triple Gate at the southern wall dating to the Second Temple era.

An amateur video revealed that a large Muslim construction project using huge masonry stones, was under way on the remains of the Jewish Temple. Rumors of plans for another mosque to be built there began to spread. By June, paving construction had begun on the NE section of the Temple Mount.

The work on this Arab complex was actually begun while Netanyahu was still in power. However the work that has been done during Barak’s 21 months is much more extensive and destructive than anything that had gone on before.

A newly formed Committee for the Prevention of the Destruction of Antiquities on the Temple Mount petitioned Ehud Barak to stop the destruction. Some 80 members of the Knesset signed the petition, but Barak’s government turned a blind eye to the destruction. And so it continued, with trucks and tractors continuing to enter and exit the site.

Those who were concerned took their case to Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein, but he took no action, and the work continued unabated.

The Israeli government finally began preventing delivery of new construction materials into the archaeologically sensitive area. [As a result of this construction blockage, the Waqf threatened to bring the whole area into conflict.](#) Israeli officials did too little, too late, to halt the digs in the Jewish ruins.

Ariel Sharon then announced his plans to visit the Temple Mount on Sept. 28. "The Temple Mount is in our hands and will remain in our hands," he said. "It is the holiest site in Judaism and it is the right of every Jew to visit the Temple Mount."

Sharon was right! The Jews can never permit such archaeological travesties.

THE AL-AQSA INTIFADA BEGAN

As Mr Sharon and his delegation were leaving the site, the stones began to fly, and full-scale riots began the next day.

Since then the Waqf (the Moslem religious trust that controls the Moslem holy places), has forbidden Israeli archaeologists from inspecting the work that is going on in the Mount.

For the first time in memory, the actual surface of the Mount in the area of the "Dome of the Rock" has been dug up and destroyed. This is the area where most archaeologists believe the Temple and the Holy of Holies stood.

A vast tunnel is reportedly being dug from underneath the Al Aqsa mosque in the direction of the Dome of the Rock. One intent here is to make the Temple Mount a vast mosque, even larger than the one in Mecca.

All the dirt and artifacts are being loaded into dump trucks and thrown into a land fill. Nothing that is dug up is being protected, studied or saved; it is all going to a rubbish heap.

This is not just carelessness or sloppy building practices; this is a purposeful attempt to destroy all evidence of the presence of both the First and Second Temples that stood on the Mount.

The latest Arab propaganda campaign claims that there never was a Jewish Temple on the Mount. It seems clear that the Waqf has set out on a destructive mission to ensure there is no trace of such a presence for future generations.

At the same time, Muslim leaders in and around Jerusalem make fiery speeches every day about destroying the Jews and establishing sovereignty over all the city.

The Waqf refuses to open up the Temple Mount for Christians, Jews, the press, and the rest of the world to witness what it has done on Judaism's most sacred ground.

At the Camp David meetings, Arafat and his negotiators refused to acknowledge any Jewish claim to the Temple Mount - past, present or future.

This is not just an anti-Jewish attack, it is an attack on the Bible itself, and it should concern every Bible believer in the world. As many in Israel who are fighting for Jewish Jerusalem have said, "a people without a past doesn't have a future."

This is true for the church as well. If the truth of the history of the Bible is denied, then the reality of Yeshua's birth, death, resurrection and His atoning work on the cross is also deniable on pure historical grounds.

The Temple Mount and its buried remains are a historical treasure for all mankind, but the Governments of Israel and all the nations have been letting the Moslems destroy it.

While there is a non-partisan group in Israel trying to protect the Temple Mount (including many supporters of Barak), I have heard nothing from the international Christian Community about this destruction.

Sources: Joseph Farah, www.worldnetdaily.com (18.12.00); and Sound of the Shofar #49 / Evelyn McMenamin and Eliyahu Ben-Haim on the internet. (27.1.01)

THE CLINTON PEACE PLAN

Bill Clinton's peace plan is a non-starter, but it is interesting to study the measures he was seeking to impose on Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.

JERUSALEM

The US proposal was based on the guiding principle that “what is Arab should go to the Arabs, and what is Jewish to the Jews.” In the Old City, the plan had Israel controlling the Jewish quarter, including the Western Wall, and a corridor in the Armenian quarter leading from the Jaffa Gate to the Wall. The Palestinians would get sovereignty over the Moslem and Christian quarters, and part of the Armenian quarter. The plan called for Israel to retain control over the Mount of Olives and the City of David.

Israel wanted clarifications on how the Mount of Olives and City of David would be linked to “Jewish” Jerusalem.

The Palestinians wanted clarifications on how Arab neighborhoods would be linked one to the other, and wanted to know what was considered the Western Wall: just the exposed area in the plaza, or a much longer segment that extends into the Moslem Quarter. The Palestinians also wanted details about the fate of Jewish neighborhoods in mainly Arab parts of the city.

THE TEMPLE MOUNT

The American proposal called for the surface of the Temple Mount to be placed under Palestinian control. The area underneath the Mount, believed to hold the remains of the First and Second Temples, would have a special status which respects Jewish rights to the site.

Clinton offered two alternatives:

- 1) That Israel receive sovereignty under the Mount, or
- 2), that an international supervisory body be set up and limit Palestinian excavations under the mount.

Ehud Barak said repeatedly that he will not sign an agreement that hands the Temple Mount to the Palestinians.

But there is wiggle room here: with the possibility existing that the Temple Mount would refer to everything underneath the Mount, and the Noble Sanctuary to everything above ground.

It is also possible that Israel would accept some kind of international - but not Palestinian sovereignty - over the mount.

The Palestinians reject Israeli claims to sovereignty on any part of the Temple Mount, above or under ground. - <Online News From Israel>



THE JEWISH TEMPLES and The BATTLE FOR MOUNT MORIAH

By BOB HINES, of Auckland, NZ

There are many reasons for the conflict between the Jewish people and the Arab, Moslem countries, not least of which is a spiritual battle. However, probably the most visible area of conflict is over possession of what is referred to as “the Temple Mount” - Mount Moriah.

What is there over this piece of land that causes such strong emotion in the hearts of these peoples?

The Bible first introduces us to this mountain in Genesis chapter 22 where we read of God testing Abraham, the father of the Jewish race.

“Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, ‘Abraham!’ ‘Here I am,’ he replied. Then God said, ‘Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.’”
(Genesis 22:1-2)

Abraham obeyed God and took his son to Mount Moriah where he built an altar. After God had stopped him from sacrificing his son, and blessed him for his obedience, he offered up a burnt offering to the LORD on this altar.

Centuries later, David, the beloved King of Israel, sinned against God and angered Him so much that He sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem. (1 Chronicles 21)

The angel obeyed God and started to destroy the city, until The LORD became grieved at what was being done and ordered the angel to stop. At this point the angel was standing at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

Then the angel ordered King David, through the prophet Gad, to set up an altar to the LORD, on this threshing floor. David approached Araunah and subsequently purchased the site for six hundred shekels of gold.

This site was Mount Moriah. The rock on which Abraham was to sacrifice his son, the threshing floor of Araunah, and the rock upon which King David set up his altar to the Lord, are all believed to be one and the same slab of rock. The same slab of rock that is today, encased within the Arab mosque - The Dome of the Rock.

David longed to build a temple to God, but as a mighty warrior, he had so much blood on his hands that God would not allow him to build this temple. Instead he

spent his life accumulating all the materials together ready for the temple's eventual construction by others.

The First Temple - SOLOMON'S TEMPLE - 957 B.C. to 587 B.C.

The honour to build the temple fell on David's son, Solomon:

“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. He began building on the second day of the second month in the fourth year of his reign.” (2 Chronicles 3:1-2)

Regardless of modern claims by other nations and peoples, Mount Moriah, where the Dome of the Rock stands today, belongs to Israel. It was given by God, and bought and paid for by King David, in hard, cold cash!

It took a labour force of at least 70,000 labourers, 80,000 stonecutters and 3,600 foremen to build Solomon's temple. In addition there were numerous craftsmen skilled in working with gold and silver, bronze and iron, and in purple and blue yarn, and experienced in the art of engraving. (2 Chronicles 2:1-7). A total **work force in excess of 150,000**, plus another 10,000 men who cut down cedar, pine and algum trees in Lebanon and floated them via the sea to Israel to use in the temple construction.

Solomon and his work force followed God's instructions, which He had previously given to King David, with great care. The temple foundation was 27 meters (90 feet) long by 9 meters (30 feet) wide with a portico at the front of the temple 9 meters (30 feet) long. The Most Holy Place was 9 meters wide, the same as the temple, and 9 meters long. In addition to the buildings, a large courtyard was constructed.

The inside of the temple and the Most Holy Place were overlaid with pure gold and adorned with precious stones. Solomon even overlaid the ceiling beams, doorframes, and doors with gold. The weight of the gold overlay in just the Most Holy Place was about **23 tons** (21 metric tons). (2 Chronicles 3)

Some of the items made to go in this temple were almost beyond description. The bronze altar alone measured 9 meters (30 feet) in length by 9 meters wide and 4.5 meters (15 feet) high. The 'sea', a huge cast metal bowl, which stood outside the temple, was so large that it was a handbreadth thick and contained around 17,500 gallons of water.

It has been estimated that, in today's values, the total cost of this building would be in excess of **one trillion dollars**.

The temple took seven years to build and was completed in November of the year 959 B.C. At the dedication ceremony, King Solomon sacrificed 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep and goats.

Years later, King Solomon disobeyed God and married a number of women from foreign nations. These women eventually caused his downfall by leading him into worshipping false gods and idols. As a result, a large number of his descendants turned away from God. (1 Kings 11)

Soon after Solomon's death, the King of Egypt ransacked the temple and carried off all its treasures. (1 Kings 14:25,26). Asa, King of Judah took further temple

treasures and money to buy an alliance with King Ben-Hadad of Aram. (1 Kings 15:18,19)

Queen Athaliah of Judah later ravaged the temple (2 Kings 11:13-15 and 2 Chronicles 24:7) and another king of Judah, King Joash, took gold and sacred objects from the temple to stop King Hazael of Aram attacking. (2 Kings 12:18)

Next King Jehoash of Israel entered the temple, taking gold and silver to get back at Amaziah. (2 Kings 14:14) and King Ahaz of Judah took more gold, silver and various furnishings from the temple to send tribute to appease Assyria's king. (2 Kings 16:8-18)

King Hezekiah of Judah then took all the silver from the temple and stripped the gold from its doors to persuade King Sennacherib of Assyria to call off his threatened attack. (2 Kings 18:13-16) Then another King of Judah, Manasseh, placed pagan altars in the temple. (2 Kings 21:4-8)

Finally God allowed Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, to raid the temple during his second and third invasions of Judah. In his third invasion he destroyed the temple and carried away what was left of its treasures. (2 Kings 24:13, 25:1-17 and 2 Chronicles 36:10, 36:18,19). The final destruction of the temple occurred on the 9th of Av (July-August) of the year 587 B.C.

The Second Temple - Stage 1 - ZERUBABEL'S TEMPLE - 520 B.C. to 20 B.C.

When King Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem he took the Jewish people back with him in exile, to Babylon. Years later, after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, the Persian Empire overthrew the Babylonian Empire.

The Persian King, Cyrus, was used by God to fulfil a prophecy given through Isaiah over a century earlier. (Isaiah 44:28 - 45:6). This prophecy actually named Cyrus and predicted that he would help the Jews return to Jerusalem.

Another prophecy, by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:11; 29:10) foretold that the Jewish captivity would last for a period of seventy years.

In 538 B.C. Cyrus did indeed open the way for the Jews to return to their homeland. The first volunteers, numbering 42,360, plus servants and musicians, returned to Israel under the leadership of Zerubbabel, who had been appointed governor of Judah by the Persians. (Ezra 1 & 2)

These people took with them large amounts of gold and silver, which they had accumulated during their exile. Those who decided not to return with them also donated gold, silver and many other items.

King Cyrus returned to the people all the temple treasures and items of worship that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from the Temple seventy years earlier. Successive Persian Kings also gave large amounts of gold, silver and treasures. King Artaxerxes, a later King, alone gave 25 tons of silver and 3 3/4 tons of gold.

Two years after their return, the Israelites started the rebuilding of God's Temple. Although it was built on the site of Solomon's temple, and was thus around the same size as the original, it was not nearly as elaborate or ornate. It would appear that much more silver than gold was used in this temple.

After a number of delays the temple was completed in 516 B.C. - twenty years after work was started.

During the following centuries God's temple was variously honoured or neglected as the people's worship and obedience to God waxed and waned.

After the fall of the Persian Empire, the next world empire, Greece, ruled the land. After the death of Alexander the Great, the Greek Empire divided into four areas, each ruled by one of Alexander's generals.

Antiochus Epiphanes ruled one of these areas, Syria, from 175 B.C. to 163 B.C. This King is believed to be a type of the Antichrist to come. He imagined himself to be a god whilst his subjects referred to him as "the madman."

He invaded Israel and desecrated the temple by setting up worship to Zeus and offering a sow as a sacrifice on the altar.

In 165 B.C. the Syrians were defeated, Jerusalem was recaptured, and the temple cleansed.

The Second Temple - Stage 2 - HEROD'S TEMPLE - 20 B.C. to A.D. 70

496 years after the building of the second temple, King Herod the Great began extending and beautifying the temple, in 20 B.C. Most of the work was done in the first ten years, but after Herod died in 4 B.C., the work continued. In the time of Jesus it had already been under way for 46 years (John 2:20). It was finally completed in 63 A.D., and was said to be one of the largest and most magnificent building complexes in the ancient world.

This is the temple of Jesus' time and the one in which the disciples were so proud.

Jesus predicted that this temple would be destroyed (Luke 21:6) and on the 9th of Av (July-August) of the year 70 A.D., the Roman legions under General Titus completely destroyed the temple.

After setting fire to the temple the gold melted and ran down into the cracks of the building stones. To get at the gold, the soldiers dismantled the temple stone by stone, literally fulfilling the prophecy that not one stone would be left upon another.

The Third Temple - THE NEAR FUTURE

Since 70 A.D. and the exile of the Jewish people, no temple has existed on Mount Moriah.

However, in 691 A.D, Abdul Malik, built and dedicated the Mosque of Omar, on the temple site. He chose this site because of the Moslem tradition that the prophet Mohammed ascended to heaven from the rock on Mt. Moriah. This rock is in the centre of the Mosque of Omar, hence the reason it is also referred to as the Dome of the Rock.

This is the same rock upon which the Bible says Abraham attempted to sacrifice his son; the same rock, which King David purchased and set up an altar to God; and the same rock around which the Jewish temples were built.

It's no wonder that this site causes so much emotion and violence between the Arabs and Jewish peoples.

Since their exile in the first century A.D., the Jews have longed for a return to their holy city of Jerusalem and the subsequent rebuilding of God's temple.

On May 14th, 1948, Israel again became a nation and the Jewish people began returning to their land. In 1967, during what is now referred to as “the six day war,” Israel recaptured the old city of Jerusalem from Jordan.

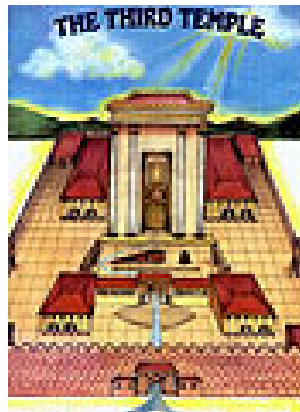
Both Jews and Christians understand from the Bible that the Messiah will reign from Jerusalem during the forthcoming promised kingdom. Both groups also understand that God’s temple will exist again prior to the arrival (or return) of the Messiah. (Revelation 11:1-2 and 2 Thessalonians 2:4)

Orthodox Jews have been working for years, preparing for the rebuilding of the temple, waiting only for some event to occur that would remove the Dome of the Rock and clear the way for construction to start.

In May of 1967 the following large advertisement appeared in the *Washington Post*:

**“TO ALL PERSONS OF THE JEWISH FAITH
ALL OVER THE WORLD:**

A project to rebuild the Temple of God in Israel is now being started. With Divine guidance and help, the “Temple” will be completed. Jews will be inspired to conduct themselves in such a moral way that our Maker will see fit to pay us a visit here on earth. Imagine the warm feeling that will be ours when this happy event takes place. “THIS IS MY GOD” is the book that was the inspiration for this undertaking. God will place in the minds of many persons in all walks of Jewish life, the desire to participate in this work. Executive talent, administrations, and workers on all levels are needed. All efforts will be anonymous. God will know those desiring to participate.”



In 1974, the Institute of Bible Design placed this advertisement in the *Jerusalem Post* - “May it be thy will, O Lord our God, that our Holy Temple be rebuilt in Jerusalem in our days.”

Whilst there are many unsubstantiated reports, such as the building stones being already cut and stored, there are also many other substantiated reports, of preparations for the third temple.

Many institutions have been set up by Israelis to prepare for this temple. Organisations such as The Temple Institute, The Jerusalem Temple Foundation, The Faithful of the Temple Mount, and others, are training priests, manufacturing the vessels and articles of worship and, preparing for the actual construction.

Reports are surfacing of special cattle being bred to enable the sacrifices in the temple to conform to God’s instructions; of Biblical Temple music being

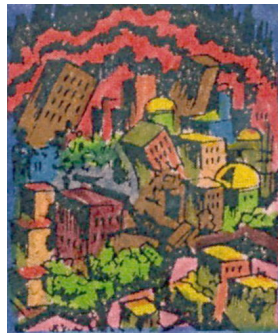
interpreted and taught, ready to be played in a new temple. These and many other reports confirm that the Jews are ready and waiting to build God's third Temple.

The only hindrance to work actually commencing, is the Dome of the Rock. Any attempt to start building the temple on or near this site would undoubtedly see the Arabs starting a "holy war."

Many Christians believe a forthcoming world leader, referred to in the Bible as the Antichrist, will give permission for this temple to be built. Few doubt that this temple will indeed be built and that it will herald the persecution of the Great Tribulation

Preparations are believed to be so well advanced that work could be started within days of the opportunity being given to do so. Just how close this day is, only God knows; yet it would appear to be not far away.

Readers are urged to watch for developments and to understand what is behind the current violence. One day, a day I believe is not far away, a peace treaty will be signed which will give the Jews the go ahead to build their temple. If you see signs of this, then be prepared, for the Rapture is near!



INDIA'S MASSIVE EARTHQUAKE

It was India's strongest quake in 50 years, and possibly the most devastating Indian quake on record. Measuring 7.9 on the richter scale, the earthquake shook India at 8:46 a.m., on 26 January - the morning of India's Republic Day.

The death toll estimates varied from 30,000 to 100,000. Many people were buried alive under the rubble of their fallen homes. Tens of thousands were injured.

The epicentre was near Bhuj in western Gujarat, a state with a population of around 42 million. 6,000 perished in Bhuj alone - a town of about 150,000. Four hospitals in the town "vanished from the face of the earth with their entire staff."

20,000 army troops were deployed, along with aircraft and naval ships, to help victims of the earthquake, in an unprecedented rescue effort undertaken by the Indian armed forces. "It is the biggest-ever rescue operation simply because this is the biggest-ever disaster," said a Defence Ministry spokesman.

In one of the worst tragedies, about 400 school children aged between 5 and 10 years, and 50 teachers, were feared dead in Anjar, a town near Bhuj. They were crushed by falling buildings in a narrow alley while marching in a Republic Day parade.

Within six days of the quake, as many as 200 aftershocks measuring more than three on the Richter scale were recorded in and around the district, including two measuring 5.9 and 4.8. Another quake of 5.5 struck in the second week.

Damage was estimated at between \$5 and \$7 billion. India's prime minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, lamented that his country was ill-prepared for such disasters.

Mr Vajpayee noted that when a cyclone killed 10,000 people in the eastern state of Orissa two years ago, his government had trouble responding. He said it was facing similar problems now.

Dozens of nations and aid agencies, including Turkey, Germany, Finland, Belgium, Switzerland, Britain, Italy, France, Russia, the U.S., and Pakistan, responded to the disaster by sending rescue and relief teams.

An Israeli team arrived 3 days after the quake, and overnight, set up a 70-bed hospital under green army tents in a Bhuj schoolyard.

The largest field hospital the Red Cross has ever run, was flown in, in crates, and also set up in Bhuj. Staffed by three dozen doctors and nurses from Red Cross societies around the world, it has 310 beds, four operating rooms, a maternity ward and the capacity to treat up to 2,000 walk-in patients a day.

Miraculously, a number of survivors were pulled from the rubble even ten days after the quake.

Elsewhere in India, fresh tremors panicked residents on Monday 29th, including a magnitude 4.3 quake, centered just outside Bangalore, 850 miles southeast of Bhuj.

IMAGES OF NUCLEAR WAR

With entire neighbourhoods in Gujarat flattened, the earthquake conjured up images of a nuclear war. In fact, according to one report, when the quake was felt in New Delhi, some members of India's government thought it was a nuclear blast.

This was a natural disaster, but it provided a deep impression of the devastation that would follow a nuclear exchange.

The offer of Pakistan, India's perennial foe, to help in relief measures, by supplying tents and blankets, provided a ray of hope that the earthquake might foster peace between these rival nations. These two nations have fought three wars, and they have been building nuclear arsenals to deter one another for years. (Both, however, have deepened their commitments to a peace effort over the past year).

India thankfully accepted Pakistan's help. (Pakistan itself suffered the loss of at least 14 lives in the same earthquake).

CHRISTIAN RELIEF TEAM

Gospel For Asia, an evangelical mission in India, one of the Christian groups that are helping quake victims, moved quickly to mobilise a 100-member team to travel to the hardest-hit areas, providing relief, and sharing the love of Christ.

"The destruction in the cities and towns is tremendous," said GFA's president, K.P. Yohannan. "But they are more accessible and can receive at least some help. The greatest suffering right now is in the remote villages, where the poorest of the poor live. That is where we are concentrating right now."

GFA relief strategy is three-fold: 1. The most immediate need for tens of thousands of people, is for food and water. This is GFA's first priority. 2. The team will

provide winter clothing. Survivors who have lost their homes or who are afraid to go back inside their homes are now sleeping in the open, and wintertime temperatures this time of year drop near to freezing at night. 3. GFA's relief team will work to erect temporary shelters for the homeless.

In addition, the team will help provide any emergency medical help that is needed. The relief efforts will not be short term, but for the "long haul," says Mr Yohannan. "This outreach will last for months."

<http://www.gfa.org/earthquake/>

EARTHQUAKES ARE ON THE INCREASE

Published seismic statistics report that

in the 15th century there were	150 earthquakes
in the 16th century	... 153
in the 17th century	... 378
in the 18th century	... 540
in the 19th century	... 2119

The 20th century figures far exceeds the 19th century.

At the beginning of the 20th century, there was, on average, two or three major earthquakes of 6.0 Richter magnitude or greater, every ten years.

(6.0 is considered a major earthquake. A 7.0 quake is ten times stronger than a 6.0 quake. An 8.0 quake is 100 times greater than a 6.0 quake; and a 9.0 quake is 1000 times stronger.)

The following report from the US Geological Survey shows the increase of major quakes over the last few decades.

From 1900	to 1910	there were	...	3
1910	to	1920	...	2
1920	to	1930	...	2
1930	to	1940	...	5
1940	to	1950	...	4
1950	to	1959	...	9
1960	to	1969	...	13
1970	to	1979	...	51
1980	to	1989	...	86
1990	to 1994	there were more than		100

7.9 QUAKES ARE NOW NOT SO RARE

A 7.9 quake is massive, but about 18 quakes of this strength now occur **each year** in various parts of the globe. Many earthquakes do not hit populated areas, and so receive little, if any, publicity. But when they hit cities, the damage and death rate is staggering, and then they do receive attention.

Earthquakes are definitely on the increase!

SOME OF THE GREATEST KILLER QUAKES

During recorded history, an estimated 74 million people have perished in earthquakes and through the subsequent floods, fires and landslides that have been triggered.

Of the thirteen greatest known earthquakes in history, ten occurred in the 20th century.

1556	CHINA		killed 830,000
1737	CALCUTTA		killed 300,000
1908	ITALY	9.0	killed 100,000
1920	CHINA		killed 180,000
1922	JAPAN	7.9	killed 143,000
1935	INDIA	7.6	killed 30,000
1939	CHILE		killed 30,000
1939	TURKEY		killed 23,000
1960	MOROCCO		killed 12,000
1960	CHILE	9.5**	killed 2-5,000
1970	PERU		killed 66,700
1972	IRAN	7.9	killed 5,000
1976	CHINA		killed 750,000
1978	IRAN		killed 25,000
1980	ALGERIA	7.5	killed 20,000
1988	ARMENIA	6 - 7	killed 25,000
1990	IRAN	7.7	killed 40,000
1999	TURKEY	7.4	killed 20,000

** World's biggest recorded quake.

INDIA'S MAJOR EARTHQUAKES

(according to the seismological department in New Delhi)

1819:	Kutch, Gujarat	8.0	killed 2,000
1897:	Shillong plateau	8.7	killed 542
1905:	Kangra, H P	8.0	killed 20,000
1934:	Indo-Nepal border	8.3	killed 10,000
1950:	Assam	8.5	killed 532
1988:	Indo-Nepal border	6.5	killed 1,000
1991:	Himalayan, U P	6.6	killed 768
1993:	Maharashtra	6.3	killed 7,600+
1997:	Madhya Pradesh	6.0	killed 40
1999:	Uttar Pradesh	6.8	killed 100+
2001:	Gujarat	7.9	killed 30,000+

GREATER QUAKES ARE AHEAD!

The Bible has specific prophecies concerning the end times. The Lord Jesus Christ declared that the days prior to His return would be characterised by wars, immorality, national anxiety, cyclones, famines, and earthquakes.

“There will be great earthquakes in various places.” (Luke 21:11)

The Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ foretells of ...

THE ULTIMATE EARTHQUAKE

“Then there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a **great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake** was it, and so mighty ... and every island fled away, and the mountains could not be found.” (Revelation 16:18,20)

The same earthquake was prophesied in the Book of Isaiah, the great prophet of ancient Israel.

“Terror and pit and snare confront you, O inhabitant of the earth. Whoever flees at the sound of terror will fall into a pit, and he who climbs out of the pit will be caught in a snare; for the windows above are opened, and **the foundations of the earth shake. The earth is broken asunder, the earth is split through, the earth is shaken violently. The earth reels and fro** like a drunkard, and it totters like a shack, for its transgression is heavy upon it.” (Isaiah 24:17-20)

These two prophecies make it clear that there IS an ultimate earthquake ahead. (The one the seismologists fear!) From the Book of Revelation it is clear that the shaking of the whole earth will occur at the end of the seven years of the Great Tribulation - that's the worldwide judgment which is described from chapters six through nineteen of Revelation.

"DIVINE VISITATION"

In a letter written in 1777, the great Methodist evangelist, John Wesley wrote, “There is no divine visitation which is likely to have so great an influence upon sinners, as an earthquake.”

That's true! In times of earthquakes, and other such disasters, people cry out to God.

After the Gujarat earthquake Hindus, Muslims and Christians, for various reasons, proclaimed the disaster a judgment of God.

Some Hindu priests declared that the Earth, revered as the mother goddess, had shuddered under the weight of sin. The priests said the quake was provoked by rampant corruption, rising immorality and neglect of religion.

The multitude of earthquakes around the world today could be termed “**Warnings of the Coming Judgment.**” God permits them so that a nation and its individuals might realise they are “but men,” and need God. In times of disaster many people realise they need to call upon the Almighty, and to be saved from their sins.

Yes, there is a judgment day coming as the apostle Paul wrote:

“Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God now commands all people everywhere to repent (*that is, to change their minds*)

and to amend their ways with abhorrence for their sins), because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all by raising Him from the dead.” (Acts 17:30-31)

The Lord Jesus Christ is the One who died for the sins of the world, and was raised from the dead, to be the living Saviour of all who trust in Him.

“But God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, *Y’shua the Messiah* died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath *of God* through Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” (Romans 5:8-10)

“And He, *the Messiah*, died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again on their behalf.” (2 Corinthians 5:15)

“Turn *and* look to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. By Myself I have sworn; the word has gone out of from My mouth in righteousness and *it* will not be revoked; that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance*. They will say of Me, ‘Only in Yahweh are righteousness and strength’.” (Isaiah 45:22-24)

The message for the nations today, is,

“Turn to the Almighty God and be saved!”

“WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF YAHWEH
THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.” (Joel 2:32. Romans 10:13)

To be reconciled to God, to be saved from the penalty of your sins, and from the wrath of the Holy God, turn to the appointed Saviour. “Believe in Y’shua the Messiah (the Lord Jesus Christ),” for it is He who saves all who put their faith in Him.

The apostle Peter told the Israelites:

“The God of our fathers raised up Y’shua, whom you killed by hanging Him on a tree. This One God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” (Acts 5:30-31)

And that is the message for ALL nations today. The risen, exalted Saviour will give repentance and forgiveness of sins to all who call on His Name.

“Believe in the Master, Y’shua the Messiah and you will be saved; (*and this applies both to*) you and your household.” (Acts 16:31)

You can do that right now, if you will! Turn to Yahweh the Almighty God in prayer, and express your faith in His Son, Y’shua, Jesus the Messiah.

“If you confess with your mouth Y’shua as ADONAI (*the Heavenly Master*) and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart man believes, *resulting* in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, *resulting* in salvation. For the Scripture says,

WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.”

(Romans 10:9-11)



THE ARK OF HIS STRENGTH



“Arise, O YHWH, to Your *place of rest*;
You and the Ark of Your Strength.”

(Psalm 132:8)

(#24 in a series of studies in THE PLAN OF GOD, by Don Stanton, from
MYSTERY 888 – MESSIAH IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY)

PSALM 132 is a Messianic psalm which looks forward to the reign of the Anointed One, the Messiah, and to “the Ark of His Strength” finding a permanent resting place in Zion - Jerusalem.

In the historical Ark of the Covenant, we find a beautiful picture of the spiritual reality that is being fulfilled in the lives of born again believers in this present age. “The Ark of His Strength” symbolises what Paul speaks of as, “Messiah in you, the Hope of Glory.”

THE AGE OF THE FULLNESS

God’s mystery plan, “888, Messiah in you,” is being fulfilled in believers during the “[age of fullness](#)” - the age of the Indwelling Holy Spirit - the age of the building of the corporate, spiritual, Temple of God.

“[The fullness of time](#)” began on earth when the eternal Son of God took on humanity at Bethlehem; that’s when the fullness of Elohim (God) dwelt in the Person of Y’shua the Messiah.

“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.” (Galatians 4:4)

“For in Him (*Y’shua the Messiah*) [all the fullness of the Eternal Deity](#) - *all the fullness of what Elohim is* - dwells in bodily *form*.” (Colossians 2:9)

The Messiah was the [new Temple](#) of God (John 2:19,21); and from His birth, He was filled with the Holy Spirit and with the Sh’khinah Glory - the manifest Presence of God.

“The Word became flesh (*incarnate, human*), and dwelt among us, and **we saw His glory**, the glory of the ‘only begotten’ (*the One and Only, the Unique, Eternal Son*) who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

The Messiah was also the Beginning of “**the new Creation**,” (2 Cor 5:17. Gal 6:15), “**the new Man**,” (Eph 2:15), and “**the new Body**” (Heb 10:5) in which all the fullness of the Glory dwelt.

From the Day of Pentecost, the Body of Messiah became a corporate Body; a corporate Temple; a corporate new Man. (“Corporate” meaning; made up of many parts or members).

From Pentecost, all born again believers became members of the Messiah; members of His Body and His Temple. They also, are now indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and by the fullness of the Messiah - the Sh’khinah Glory.

“For **out of His fullness** we have all received, grace upon grace.” (John 1:16)

“For *it is* God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts for the enlightening of the knowledge of the **glory of God in the face of Y’shua the Messiah**. And we have this **treasure in earthen vessels**, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves.” (2 Corinthians 4:6-7)

“He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed *beforehand* in Himself - a plan **for the period when the age has reached its fullness**; a *plan* to sum up all things in the Messiah - *to bring everything under the headship of Messiah* - everything in heaven and on earth.” (Ephesians 1:9-10)

“And He put all things under His feet, and made Him the Head over all things for the Ekklesia - *the universal assembly of believers who are in fellowship with Y’shua* - which is **His body, the fullness of Him** who fills all in all.” (Ephesians 1:22-23)

That fullness of Messiah is typified, by “the Ark of His Strength.” And just as the **physical** Ark dwelt in the Holy of Holies, the innermost sanctuary of the Tabernacle, (and the Temple of Solomon), the Reality of the **spiritual** Ark (which is Messiah), dwells in the innermost sanctuary of the believer - in his spirit. (Believers, you know, you are the Temple of God, both individually and collectively).

Now let’s read Psalm 132, which can be divided into 5 sections:

1 DAVID’S VOW TO YAHWEH (1-5)

“O YHWH, remember David, *and* all his afflictions; how he swore to YHWH, *and* vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob; ‘I will not enter my house, nor go to lie on my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids; until I find a place for YHWH, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob’.”

David’s burden, to provide a resting place for the Ark of God, was very much in line with the will of God. The Almighty has always sought to dwell and walk with the creatures He made in His own image;- in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:8), in the wilderness wanderings of Israel, in the land of promise (Exodus 25:8. 29:45, Leviticus

26:11-12); in the Person of Messiah (John 1:14); in and amongst the churches - the golden lampstands (Rev 2:1); and in believers' hearts today ...

“*I pray* that out of the riches of His glory, He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that the **Messiah may dwell in your hearts** through faith *in Him*.” (Ephesians 3:6-17)

2 THE CRY FOR YAHWEH AND HIS ARK (6-10)

“Look! We heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of Jaar (*Kiriath-Jearim*). Let us go into His dwelling place; let us worship at His footstool. **Arise, O YHWH, to Your place of rest; You, and the Ark of Your Strength.** Let Your priests put on righteousness; and let Your humble, devout ones shout for joy. For the sake of David Your servant, do not turn away the face of Your Anointed *One*.”

Here are God's genuine people crying out for His Presence and righteousness to dwell amongst them. When the believers' burning desire lines up with God's desire, things begin to happen.

3 THE VOW OF YAHWEH TO DAVID (11-12)

“YHWH has sworn *in* truth to David, *and* He will not revoke it; ‘Of the fruit of your body - your descendants - I will set upon your throne. If your sons keep My covenant, and My testimonies that I teach them, their sons also shall sit upon your throne for ever’.”

God's ultimate dwelling amongst His people would be in the Person of David's greater Son - Y'shua the Messiah; the One who is destined rule the world in righteousness.

4 THE DWELLING-PLACE OF YAHWEH (13-16)

“For YHWH has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling. ‘This *is* My *place of rest* for ever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her *with* provisions; I will satisfy her needy ones with bread; I will clothe her priests with salvation; and her humble, devout ones will sing for joy’.”

Yahweh, (blessed is His Name), locates the very place of His chosen rest - Mt Zion, Jerusalem. Significantly, the spiritual name of the church is also called Mt Zion and Jerusalem.

“But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God; to myriads of angels, to the *Universal* Assembly, to the Ekklesia - *the corporate body* of “The Firstborn” who are enrolled in heaven.” (Heb. 12:22-23)

The earthly Jerusalem cannot be His resting place for ever, as this earth will pass away. But the Heavenly Jerusalem (the Body and Temple of Messiah) will never pass away.

5 THE MESSIAH'S REIGN IN GLORY (17-18)

“There I will cause the horn of David* to bud and grow; I have prepared a lamp for Mine Anointed *One*. His enemies I will clothe with shame; while on Him His crown shall shine.” (* ‘The Horn of David’ here, symbolises ‘the Strong One, the Great King-Messiah.’)

“In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to Him; and His place of rest will be glorious.”
(Isaiah 11:10)

Jesse was David’s father. The Root of Jesse and the Horn of David both refer to Messiah - *Y’shua Nissi* (Y’shua my Banner).

THE ARK OF HIS STRENGTH (v.8)

This Ark is called by several other names:

[The Ark of the Covenant](#) (Numbers 10:33)

[The Ark of the Testimony](#) (Exodus 25:16)

[The Ark of God](#) (1 Samuel 3:3)

[The Ark of Adonai Yahweh](#) (1 Kings 2:26)

[The Holy Ark](#) (2 Chronicles 35:3)

[The Ark of God which is called by the Name, the very Name of Yahweh of Hosts.](#) (2 Samuel 6:2)

The Ark was dwelt in the innermost Sanctuary of the Tabernacle, and later in Solomon’s temple - also in the Holy of Holies.

FEATURES OF THE ARK (Exodus 25:10-22)

- * The Box was made of acacia wood (25:2), and was covered with gold inside and out. (25:11)
- * It had four rings made of gold (25:12), and two poles of acacia wood to carry it (25:13-15)
- * On top of the Ark was the Mercy Seat made of pure gold. (25:17, 21-22)
- * Two Cherubim, made of gold, were at the two ends of the Mercy Seat. Their wings were spread upward, covering the Mercy Seat. They faced each other, but their faces were turned down toward the Mercy Seat. (25:18-20)
- * The Mercy Seat was the place of Atonement. Once a year, on Yom Kippur, (the Day of Atonement 10th Tishrei), the High Priest entered the innermost Sanctuary and sprinkled blood on the Mercy Seat to atone for the people of Israel.
- * The Sh’khinah Glory (the Manifest Presence of God) dwelt in the space between the Mercy Seat and the wings of the cherubim. (Ps 80:1; 99:1; 1 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 6:2) That was where the Glory of God shone forth.

Significance - The hard, indestructible [acacia wood](#) speaks of the [humanity](#) of the Messiah - His life and ministry. He was a “root out of dry ground.” (Isaiah 53:2). The [gold](#) speaks of His [Deity](#). So we see both His Deity and Humanity in the Ark.

The Ark represents the dwelling place of God with men, and at the same time it represents the Throne of God where the Messiah is manifested in Glory at the Right Hand of the Father.

THE CONTENTS OF THE ARK

The Ark contained three items. Hebrews 9:3-5:

“Then behind the second curtain, *there was the section of the tabernacle called the Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place*, which had the golden

altar *of incense* and the ark of the covenant that was overlaid on all sides with gold. *The Ark* contained a golden jar of manna, Aaron's rod that had sprouted, and *the two* stone tablets of the covenant - *the Ten Commandments*. Above *the Ark* were cherubim, *the guardians of the Sh'khinah* Glory, overshadowing the Mercy Seat. But we cannot speak of these things in detail now."

(Note: The golden altar of incense was normally kept in the first section of the Tabernacle where incense was burnt upon it every morning [Exodus 30:7]; but, according to the *Mischna*, the altar was taken into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement).

1 THE TWO TABLETS OF STONE - 10 Commandments

"You shall put into the Ark, the Testimony which I will give you."
(Exodus 25:16)

The heart of the Torah (the Teaching of God) was the Ten Commandments. The Law was to be preserved in the Ark, indicating that God's throne was upheld by righteousness.

Significance - The Torah, the Word of God, represents **Y'shua**, who is both the Author of the Word, and the Living Word. And the Word became flesh. (John 1:14) The Word reveals, guides and corrects His people.

2 THE MANNA from Heaven

"Our fathers ate the manna in the desert, as it has been written, HE GAVE THEM BREAD FROM HEAVEN TO EAT. [Ex. 16:15]. Then Y'shua said to them, 'I tell you the truth; Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world'." (John 6:31-33)

Significance - The Manna represents **Y'shua**, the Bread that came down from Heaven - the Bread of Life. The Bread sustains and gives life. "Eating bread" represents fellowship, and our fellowship with the Father is through feeding on the Living Bread. (1 John 1:3. John 6:48-58)

3 AARON'S ROD that Budded

The choice of Aaron's rod for perpetual reminder and preservation, is full of significance. What was it that caused Aaron's rod to bud and bear fruit? If you can't recall the account, read Numbers 16 & 17. It's interesting!

Briefly: In chapter 16 we see the Israelites grumbling again, and accusing Moses and Aaron of causing the death of the LORD's people. The Sh'khinah glory appeared over the Tabernacle, and God told Moses to stand aside as He was going to consume the Israelites. A plague started. 14,700 died. But when Aaron made atonement for the people, the plague was checked.

In chapter 17 Yahweh told Moses to take twelve rods - one from each tribe. On the rod of Levi he was to write the name of Aaron. Then were then deposited in the Tabernacle.

The LORD said, the rod that He chose would sprout. The next day Moses went into the Tabernacle and brought out the twelve rods, and gave each rod to its tribe. And then, of course, everyone saw that Aaron's rod has sprouted, put forth buds, produced blossoms, and bore almonds.

Moses was then commanded to put Aaron's rod back into the Tabernacle as a sign against the rebels and grumblers, so that they would not die. The Almighty was making it very clear that Aaron was His anointed high priest, and rebellion against him would not be tolerated.

Now notice it was not Moses' rod that was placed in the Tabernacle. It was the High Priest's rod. There is a difference between those two rods.

Moses' rod was a rod of power, authority, and judgment. It was a fearful rod - it was stretched out over Egypt to bring the plagues, and to destroy the enemies. It struck the rock to produce water. It was a scary rod. You can imagine your fear should Moses point his rod at you!!

Aaron's rod represented the high priestly office, and the ministry, not of judgment, but of atonement. It represented the ministry of Divine Grace.

The rod that budded and bore fruit was a perpetual proof of the genuine priesthood of God's chosen high priest.

Moses' rod could remove the **murmurers**, but **Aaron's rod** could remove the **murmurs**.

Significance - Aaron's rod that budded represents **Y'shua**, the Resurrection and the Life. Y'shua was "declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom 1:4)

Aaron's rod also represents the One who is the High Priest of the New Covenant. Because of His Resurrection, Y'shua is the High Priest who serves in the power of an endless, indestructible life. (Hebrews 7:16). So Y'shua, in this picture, is the **Rod of Resurrection and of Grace**.

In another picture, Y'shua could be pictured as the Rod of Moses, for all judgment is committed to Him, and He will indeed destroy His enemies. (Rev 19:11-21)

THE ARK ABANDONED

It was a tragic day when God abandoned the Ark of the Covenant. It was during a time of national apostasy and idolatry. Eli was the high priest-ruler of Israel, but his sons and many of the people were so blatantly evil that God was enraged.

"They (*the Israelites*) enraged Him (*Yahweh*) with their high places, and moved Him to jealousy with their carved images. God heard *this*, and He was furious, and greatly detested *and* opposed Israel. So He abandoned the Dwelling Place of Shiloh, the Tent which He had set up among men; and **gave up *the Ark of His Strength to captivity***, and His glory to the hand of an adversary." (Psalm 78:58-61)

The account is in first Samuel:

"The Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and every man fled to his tent. The slaughter was very great, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. And the Ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died ... *When the messenger* mentioned the Ark of God, Eli fell off the seat backwards beside the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy." (1 Samuel 4:10-11, 18)

The Ark ended up in the hands of the pagan Philistines, but instead of bringing blessing to them, it brought heaps of trouble, until they put it on a cart and sent it back. (1 Samuel 5 & 6)

THE ARK RECOVERED

The Ark was first kept in Kiriath-jearim, 16 km west of Jerusalem. It was not returned to Shiloh as that city was evidently destroyed in the battle of Aphek. (1 Sam 4:1). For years the Ark had no true “resting place.” Finally it was brought back, in two stages, to Jerusalem, and placed in a tent there. (2 Sam 6:2-17)

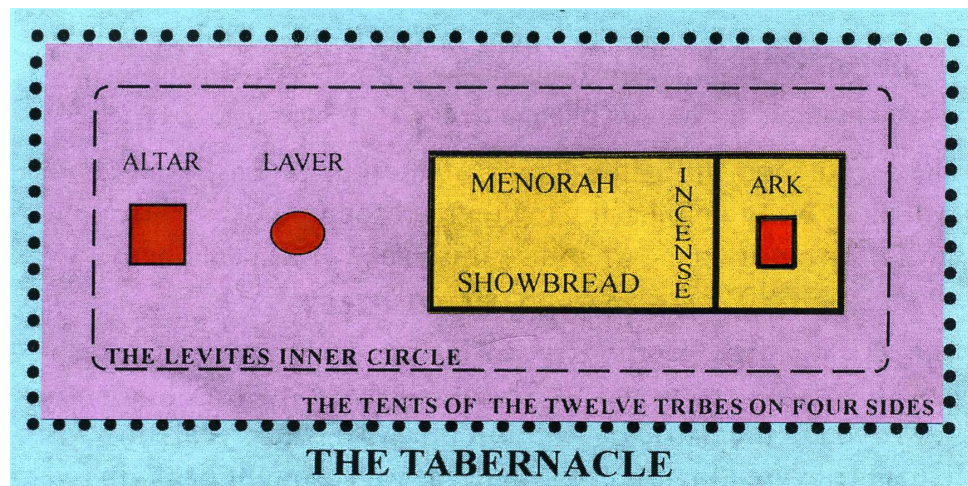
David lamented the fact that the Ark was housed in a tent, while he lived in a palace. And yet, he was not permitted to build a temple where the Presence of Yahweh might dwell in the midst of Israel. (2 Sam 7:2-17). It remained for Solomon to build the temple. And when the temple was dedicated, it was filled with the Sh’khinah glory. (2 Chronicles 7:1-3)

So once more the Ark and the Glory found a Resting Place amongst God’s people. But it was not permanent. Less than 400 years later, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians. The temple was destroyed, and the Ark disappeared. It is believed that before the destruction of the city, Jeremiah hid the Ark - possibly under the temple mount itself.

THE TABERNACLE and THE ARK - TYPES OF THE MESSIAH and HIS BODY

The Tabernacle had three parts - the Outer Structure, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies (the innermost sanctuary).

The people of Israel could see the Outer Structure, but could not enter it. The priests entered the Holy Place, daily, to minister to The LORD. This section contained the Table of Showbread (The Bread of His Presence); the Altar of Incense, and the Menorah (The Golden Lampstand).



The High Priest only, entered the Most Holy Place, once a year, on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. This inner sanctuary contained only the Ark of the Covenant, where the Sh’khinah dwelt above the Mercy Seat and between the cherubim.

Significance - The believer’s body is called the “temple of God.”

The believer “in Christ” is made up of three parts. His outer structure is his physical **body**; his inner man is his **soul**; and his innermost sanctuary is his **spirit**.

“Do you not know that you are a Dwelling Place (temple) of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16)

But the temple is more than the body. It includes the believer's soul and spirit. The spirit of the believer is the [inner sanctuary](#) of his temple; and it is in that innermost place that the Sh'khinah Glory dwells.

“Messiah in you *is* the Hope (*the Reality*) of Glory.”

I repeat, the Messiah, Y'shua, is the Sh'khinah Glory! And He dwells in the hearts (the innermost sanctuary) of every born again believer.

“For *it is* God ... who has shone in our hearts for the enlightening of the knowledge of the [glory of God in the Face \(or the Person\) of Y'shua the Messiah](#). And we have this [treasure in earthen vessels](#), that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves.”

(2 Corinthians 4:6-7)

When we are “in Christ”, and Christ is in us, we are part of His new Creation, part of His Body, part of the new Man, and part of His Heavenly Temple. Believer, [you](#) are included in the Book of Hebrews:

“But [you](#) have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God; to myriads of angels, to the [Universal](#) Assembly, to the Ekklesia - the corporate body of ‘The Firstborn’ who are enrolled in heaven. [You have come](#) to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect; and [you have come](#) to Y'shua the Mediator of a New Covenant and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks *of mercy* - a more gracious message than *the blood of Abel which cried out for vengeance*.”

(Hebrews 12:22-24)

Believer, your body, soul and spirit is the Tabernacle of God. The Almighty has chosen you to be His habitation. And your innermost sanctuary is the resting place of the spiritual “Ark of His Strength” and the Sh'khinah Glory - the manifest Presence - the Messiah in you!

In the Ark you have the [Tablets - Y'shua the Word of God - the Word of Life](#). He gives you direction, guidance, wisdom, spiritual knowledge, and writes God's precepts on your heart.

In the Ark you have the [Manna - Y'shua the Heavenly Manna - Bread of Life](#). He gives you sustenance and nourishment. He will feed you till you want no more.

In the Ark you have the [Rod - Y'shua the Resurrection and the Life - the Rod of Grace](#). He made atonement for you, and gives you power, enabling, and fruit. [He lives out His resurrection life in your redeemed personality](#).

My dear reader, if your heart is disturbed, if you are troubled by the pressures of life, if your spirit is like a turbulent sea, if your heart is not at peace, then first check if there is sin and failure in your life, or any bitterness towards another person; and confess it to the Father. (1 John 1:9. Eph 4:31-32). Then, present your body as a living sacrifice to God. (Romans 12:1-2), and make your needs known to God.

“Do not be anxious about anything - do not worry at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. And the peace of God, which exceeds all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds through the Messiah, Y'shua.”

(Philippians 4:6-7)

Now listen to the words of Y'shua, and let the Ark of His Strength instill peace and rest in your troubled soul today.

“Shalom - Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:27)

AMEN!

