

Will the Temple Be Rebuilt?

By David Wright

A popular misconception is that Israel's territory continues to be "holy ground" and that Jerusalem is still "the city of God." Many church-goers expect the entire Jewish race to come to God in faith "in the end times." Paul does say that "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26), but he is referring to true Israel, spiritual Israel, God's chosen people the church. All Christians, Jews and Gentiles, belong to the true Israel (2:28-29, 9:1-7).

Incredibly, some millennialists (people who predict a literal 1,000-year reign of Christ in Jerusalem) maintain that a reconstituted Israel will serve God faithfully in the end times by once again erecting a temple and offering animal sacrifices. This idea is completely out of sync with the message of Hebrews. First, Jesus' supreme sacrifice on the cross did away with the OT sacrificial system permanently. Christ "offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins. [...] For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified" (Heb. 10:12, 14). Second, because he belonged to Judah rather than the priestly tribe Levi, Jesus could never serve as the perpetual High Priest in an earthly priesthood. If the Lord "were on earth, he would not be a priest at all" (8:4; cf. 7:14).

Will Israel's temple one day be rebuilt in Jerusalem? Maybe. But it would not be God's doing. The Lord's temple is the church of his beloved Son. Paul tells his brothers and sisters in Ephesus that "you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22).

Family Workbook

In the full-nest years, mom and dad may pour all their energy into caring for the children. Seems like a good idea. But when the kids are gone, so is the bond holding the couple together. Don't let this happen in your house. Find a babysitter and go on a date.

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