Fulfilled Prophecies

Why The New Jerusalem Has No Temple



By Dan Maines

Why The New Jerusalem Has No Temple

Introduction

† For centuries, the temple in Jerusalem stood at the center of Israel's worship. It represented God's presence among His covenant people, the place of sacrifice, priesthood, and access to God.

† Yet when John described the New Jerusalem, he revealed something remarkable. There was no temple anywhere in the city because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb were its temple (Revelation 21:22).

† This wasn't an omission or a promise that another temple would eventually be constructed. It was the fulfillment of everything the earthly temple had represented.
† Jesus had already identified Himself as the true temple, promised worship that wouldn't depend on a sacred location, and established His people as God's dwelling place (John 2:19-21; John 4:21-24; Ephesians 2:19-22).
† The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in AD 70 publicly confirmed the end of the Old Covenant system. The New Covenant reality had arrived, and God's people no longer needed a physical sanctuary to approach Him (Hebrews 9:8-12; Hebrews 10:19-22).
† The New Jerusalem has no temple because God's presence is no longer represented by a building. Through Jesus Christ, His people live in direct covenant fellowship with Him (Hebrews 12:22-24).

The Lord And The Lamb Are Its Temple

Revelation 21:22
I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.
† John didn't describe a city waiting for a temple to be constructed. He described a city in which the temple's purpose had been completely fulfilled (Revelation 21:3).
† Under the Old Covenant, God's presence was represented by the sanctuary, its priesthood, and its sacrifices. Under the New Covenant, believers approach God through Jesus Christ Himself (Hebrews 9:11-12; Hebrews 10:19-22).
† The absence of a temple wasn't a loss. It revealed that the separation represented by the earthly sanctuary had been overcome through Christ (Ephesians 2:13-18).
† John identified both the Father and the Lamb as the temple because access to the Father is established through the Son. No earthly structure can provide anything beyond what Christ has accomplished (John 14:6; Hebrews 7:25).
† This is why the New Jerusalem isn't dependent on a

geographical location. Its defining reality is God's presence among His redeemed people (Revelation 21:2-3; Hebrews 12:22-23).

Jesus Identified Himself As The True Temple

John 2:19-21
Jesus answered them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said, It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days? But He was speaking of the temple of His body.
† Jesus deliberately redirected attention away from the physical temple toward Himself. The religious leaders understood His statement as a reference to Herod's temple, but John explained that Jesus was speaking about His own body (Matthew 12:6).
† The earthly temple had served as the appointed place where God met with Israel. Jesus revealed that God's presence and redemptive purpose were now centered in Him (Colossians 2:9; John 1:14).
† His death and resurrection established the foundation of the New Covenant. The true meeting place between God and humanity wasn't a building made by human hands but the risen Son of God (Hebrews 8:6; 1 Timothy 2:5).
† This explains why rebuilding an earthly temple would never restore what the Old Covenant sanctuary represented. Christ has already fulfilled its purpose through His completed sacrifice and continuing priesthood (Hebrews 9:24-26; Hebrews 10:12-14).
† John's vision of a templeless city was consistent with what Jesus had taught decades earlier. The true temple had already appeared in the person of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:19; John 14:9).

Worship Would No Longer Depend On Jerusalem

John 4:21-24
Jesus said to her, Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when

neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.
† Jesus told the Samaritan woman that the coming order of worship wouldn't be centered on either Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem. The geographical dispute would lose its covenant significance (Acts 7:48-50).
† Notice that Jesus said the hour was coming and had already begun. He wasn't describing a religious transformation that would wait thousands of years. The transition was beginning through His earthly ministry (Luke 16:16; Hebrews 9:10).
† Worship in spirit and truth means approaching the Father through the reality revealed in Christ rather than depending on the shadows and regulations of the former covenant (Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 10:1).
† The physical temple remained standing when Jesus spoke these words, but its approaching end had already been announced. The destruction in AD 70 would remove the old center of worship, confirming the transition Jesus proclaimed (Matthew 24:1-2; Luke 21:20-22).
† The New Jerusalem has no temple because worship is no longer restricted to a sacred mountain, city, priesthood, or building. Believers have access to the Father through Christ in one Spirit (Ephesians 2:18; Philippians 3:3).

God's People Have Become His Dwelling Place

Ephesians 2:19-22
So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy

temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.
† Paul described believers as members of God's household and citizens of His kingdom. Their identity wasn't determined by an earthly temple or national boundary but by their union with Jesus Christ (Philippians 3:20; Galatians 3:28-29).
† The foundation was the teaching of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Himself as the cornerstone. This was a spiritual structure established by God, not a physical building awaiting construction (1 Peter 2:4-6).
† Jews and Gentiles were being joined together into one holy dwelling place. The division maintained under the former covenant was removed through Christ's reconciling work (Ephesians 2:14-16; Galatians 3:26-28).
† Paul's language was present and active. God's dwelling place was already being established among believers in the first century. They weren't waiting for a future earthly sanctuary to experience His presence (2 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 3:16).
† The completed New Covenant order is therefore consistent with John's vision. God dwells among His people, and His people belong to Him (Revelation 21:3; 1 Peter 2:9-10).

The Earthly Sanctuary Was A Copy Of The Heavenly Reality

Hebrews 9:8-12
The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the

holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.
† Hebrews explains that the earthly sanctuary belonged to a temporary covenant arrangement. Its sacrifices and regulations couldn't provide the complete access to God that Christ would establish (Hebrews 10:1-4).
† The first tabernacle represented the limitations of the Old Covenant system. Its continuing service testified that the former order hadn't yet been completely removed (Hebrews 8:13).
† Christ entered the greater and more perfect sanctuary through His own blood. His sacrifice wasn't repeated annually because His redemptive work accomplished what animal sacrifices could never accomplish (Hebrews 9:24-26).
† The time of reformation was the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. That transition reached its historical conclusion with Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70 (Hebrews 10:37; Matthew 24:34).
† John's templeless New Jerusalem represents the completed reality toward which the earthly sanctuary had pointed. The shadow gave way to the substance, and the temporary arrangement gave way to Christ's permanent priesthood (Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 7:23-25).

The Veil Was Torn Because Access Was Opened

Matthew 27:50-51
And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.
† When Jesus died around AD 30, the temple veil was torn from top to bottom. This extraordinary event demonstrated that access to God was being opened through Christ's sacrifice (Hebrews 10:19-20).
† Under the Old Covenant, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place only once each year, carrying sacrificial blood. Christ fulfilled that priestly pattern through His own sacrifice (Hebrews 9:7; Hebrews 9:11-12).
† The tearing of the veil marked the theological end of the

separation represented by the sanctuary. The temple continued operating during the covenant transition, but its sacrificial system had already been surpassed by Christ (Hebrews 10:11-14).
† Forty years later, Jerusalem's destruction removed the physical structure associated with that former covenant order. The events weren't unrelated judgments but parts of the same unfolding covenant fulfillment (Luke 21:20-22; Hebrews 8:13).
† The New Jerusalem doesn't need a veil because Christ has provided access to the Father. It doesn't need another sacrificial altar because His sacrifice was offered once for all (Hebrews 10:18-22).

The New Jerusalem Was The Heavenly City They Were Approaching

Hebrews 12:22-24
But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.
† The writer didn't tell believers that they would reach the heavenly Jerusalem thousands of years later. He declared that they had already come to Mount Zion and the city of the living God (Galatians 4:26).
† Their access was grounded in Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant. The heavenly city was identified with the assembly of God's redeemed people rather than the geographical boundaries of earthly Jerusalem (Philippians 3:20; Ephesians 2:19).
† The contrast throughout Hebrews is between the temporary Old Covenant order and the permanent kingdom established through Christ (Hebrews 12:18-21; Hebrews 12:28).
† This explains why the New Jerusalem doesn't contain another

physical sanctuary. Its inhabitants have direct covenant access to the living God through their eternal High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16; Hebrews 7:25).
† What the first-century believers were approaching during the covenant transition became the fully established New Covenant reality when the former order passed away in AD 70 (Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 10:37).

The New Jerusalem Is God's Dwelling Among His People

Revelation 21:2-3
And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,
† John identified the New Jerusalem as a bride prepared for her husband. This imagery connects the city with God's covenant people, not merely with buildings, streets, and physical architecture (Revelation 21:9-10; Ephesians 5:25-27).
† The announcement that God's dwelling is among His people fulfills the covenant promise that He would be their God and they would be His people (Leviticus 26:11-12; Ezekiel 37:26-27).
† The city comes down from heaven because its origin and authority are from God. The vision doesn't describe believers abandoning the earth to establish another earthly temple (Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 11:10).
† The Old Covenant temple represented God's presence within a restricted sanctuary. The New Covenant establishes His presence among all who belong to Christ (2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21-22).
† The bride, the city, and the dwelling place of God are connected descriptions of one fulfilled covenant reality. God's redeemed people live in fellowship with Him through the Lamb

(Revelation 22:3-4; John 14:23).

The Gates Remain Open Because The Kingdom Is Present

Revelation 21:25-27
In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.
† The open gates reveal continuing access to the blessings of the New Covenant. The city isn't described as a temporary refuge that disappears after the first century (Revelation 22:17).
† The nations bringing their glory into the city reflects the inclusion of people from every nation through the gospel of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 60:3; Matthew 28:19).
† The distinction between those inside and those outside demonstrates that the New Jerusalem represents covenant fellowship with God. Entrance is through Christ, not through physical relocation to a reconstructed Jerusalem (John 10:9; Revelation 22:14-15).
† The absence of night expresses the permanent light and security of God's presence. The redeemed no longer depend on the limited access and repeated rituals of the former sanctuary (John 8:12; 1 John 1:7).
† The gates remain open because the invitation of the gospel continues. People today can enter the blessings of the New Covenant through faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1-2; Revelation 22:17).

Historical References
† Flavius Josephus, The Jewish War, Book 6, Chapters 4-5, described the burning and destruction of Jerusalem's temple during the Roman siege in AD 70. His account establishes the historical removal of the sanctuary that had served as the center of Israel's sacrificial worship.
† Josephus, The Jewish War, Book 7, Chapter 1, described the

devastation of Jerusalem after the Roman victory. The city's destruction confirmed that the former temple system could no longer continue in its established location.
† Tacitus, Histories, Book 5, Chapters 10-13, recorded the Roman campaign against Jerusalem and the circumstances surrounding the city's siege. His account provides independent Roman historical testimony concerning the conflict.
† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapters 5-7, connected the destruction of Jerusalem with the warnings Jesus had given concerning the city. He also preserved the tradition that Christians had departed from Jerusalem before its destruction.
† These historical accounts establish the reality of Jerusalem's destruction. Scripture provides the covenant meaning of those events through Jesus' predictions and the New Testament teaching concerning the passing of the former sanctuary (Luke 21:20-22; Hebrews 8:13).

How It Applies To Us Today
† We don't need to travel to Jerusalem to experience God's presence. Through Jesus Christ, believers have access to the Father wherever they live (John 4:23-24; Ephesians 2:18).
† We don't need another earthly temple, another sacrificial priesthood, or another system of animal offerings. Christ's sacrifice is complete, and His priesthood is permanent (Hebrews 7:24-27; Hebrews 10:12-14).
† We aren't waiting for the New Jerusalem to descend at some future date. Scripture identifies the heavenly Jerusalem as the covenant home of God's people, and believers already belong to that city through Christ (Hebrews 12:22-23; Galatians 4:26).
† We are God's dwelling place through the Holy Spirit. Our relationship with Him isn't dependent on a sacred building, religious ceremony, or national identity (1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:19-22).
† We can approach God with confidence because Jesus has opened the way. The separation represented by the temple veil has been overcome through His completed sacrifice (Hebrews

4:16; Hebrews 10:19-22).
† We should never confuse the modern nation of Israel or a proposed rebuilding of the temple with the fulfillment of New Covenant prophecy. God's promises find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ and His redeemed people (2 Corinthians 1:20; Galatians 3:16, 29).
† The New Jerusalem has no temple because God hasn't left His people waiting outside a sanctuary. Through Christ, we've been brought near and welcomed into His household (Ephesians 2:13, 19; John 14:23).

Q & A Appendix
Q: Why did John see no temple in the New Jerusalem?
A: Because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The earthly sanctuary's purpose was fulfilled through Jesus Christ, who provides direct access to the Father (Revelation 21:22; Hebrews 10:19-22).
Q: Did Jesus teach that the physical temple would be replaced?
A: Yes. Jesus identified His own body as the true temple and announced that worship would no longer depend on Jerusalem or Mount Gerizim (John 2:19-21; John 4:21-24).
Q: Does the New Jerusalem represent a future physical city?
A: In the fulfilled perspective, it represents the completed New Covenant dwelling of God among His people. Hebrews declared that believers had already come to the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 21:2-3).
Q: Why was the temple destroyed in AD 70?
A: Jesus predicted its destruction as part of the judgment upon first-century Jerusalem. Its removal marked the historical conclusion of the former covenant order (Matthew 24:1-2, 34; Luke 21:20-22; Hebrews 8:13).
Q: If believers are God's temple, why does Revelation say there is no temple?
A: Paul described believers as God's spiritual dwelling place, while John explained that the New Jerusalem contains no separate sanctuary because God and the Lamb are its temple. These teachings describe complementary aspects of the same

New Covenant relationship (Ephesians 2:19-22; Revelation 21:22).
Q: Does the absence of a temple mean God no longer dwells with humanity?
A: No. It means the opposite. God's presence is established among His redeemed people without the separation represented by the former sanctuary (Revelation 21:3; 2 Corinthians 6:16).
Q: Will another temple be required to fulfill biblical prophecy?
A: No. Jesus fulfilled the purpose of the earthly sanctuary, and His sacrifice accomplished eternal redemption. The New Testament doesn't require another physical temple to complete His work (Hebrews 9:11-12; Hebrews 10:12-14).
Q: Can people still enter the New Jerusalem today?
A: Yes. The gates remain open, and the invitation to receive the water of life continues. Through faith in Christ, people enter the blessings of His established kingdom (Revelation 21:25-27; Revelation 22:14, 17; John 10:9).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †
© Fulfilled Prophecies - Dan Maines.

Source Index
† Revelation 21:22; John 2:19-21; John 4:21-24; Ephesians 2:19-22; Hebrews 9:8-12; Matthew 27:50-51; Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 21:2-3; Revelation 21:25-27
† Flavius Josephus, The Jewish War, Book 6, Chapters 4-5; Book 7, Chapter 1; Tacitus, Histories, Book 5, Chapters 10-13; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapters 5-7

Share on Facebook

Links

Facebook Link

https://www.facebook.com/groups/1349070089314462/posts/2159600618261401/

Fulfilled Prophecies https://www.facebook.com/groups/1349070089314462/

Dan Maines

https://www.facebook.com/groups/1349070089314462/user/100001027365819/

You may share this article freely without permission as long as you include credit to Dan Maines and/or a link to the Fulfilled Prophecies Group.