

<Introduction>

“The destruction of the temple” by Jeremiah

Today, we are going to study the destruction of the temple.

<The prophesy about End Times begins with the destruction of the temple>

It is well known to us that the Lord talked about the End Times in the book of Matthew chapter 24. In this chapter, He starts by talking about the destruction of the temple as written in the scripture reference below.

Matthew 24:1 Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings.

24:2 “Do you see all these things?” he asked. “Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”

24:3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”

I don't think it is just coincidence that the description of the End Times starts with the destruction of the temple. Besides, it also begins with the destruction of the temple in other Gospels such as Mark and Luke. Therefore, we can imagine that the destruction of the temple in End Times could be something meaningful and special.

<What does the temple symbolize?>

What does the destruction of the temple symbolize biblically? How different is it from the destruction of other buildings such as schools or office building?

To understand this, we need to go back to when the temple was first built. The temple was built when Solomon was king, it was a luxurious and

beautiful building with God's presence as described in scriptures below.

1Kings 8:10 When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the Lord.

8:11 And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple.

So, we need to understand that the temple in the Bible was very important as the central place of worship for the Israelis who were God's chosen people.

<What does the destruction of the temple mean?>

Now, what is the biblical meaning of the destruction of the temple? It is described below.

1 Kings 9:6 "But if you or your descendants turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them,

9:7 then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples.

9:8 This temple will become a heap of rubble. All[c] who pass by will be appalled and will scoff and say, 'Why has the Lord done such a thing to this land and to this temple?'

9:9 People will answer, 'Because they have forsaken the Lord their God, who brought their ancestors out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them—that is why the Lord brought all this disaster on them.'"

Here, it says "...will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name." This shows that God Himself is going to destroy the temple. The reason for this is described as "(you) do not observe the commands and decrees I have

given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them.” This means that when God’s people stop following God’s commands, they are going to accept heresy and that leads to God’s wrath. It is written that the temple will be rejected and consequently destroyed.

Therefore, we need to understand the true meaning of the destruction of the temple. It doesn’t happen by accident or without reason. Rather, this shows the wrath of God caused by rebellion and that his judgment was made against it.

As is written in the Gospel, “not one of them (sparrows) will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care”. So, the temple would never be destroyed unless it is God’s will.

<The temple is destroyed by Babylon>

Now, the day finally came when God’s temple was going to be dishonored and destroyed. This was the day when Babylon attacked and the Bible explains in the scriptures below.

2 Chronicles 36:16 But they mocked God’s messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the Lord was aroused against his people and there was no remedy.

36:17 He brought up against them the king of the Babylonians, who killed their young men with the sword in the sanctuary, and did not spare young men or young women, the elderly or the infirm. God gave them all into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar.

36:18 He carried to Babylon all the articles from the temple of God, both large and small, and the treasures of the Lord’s temple and the treasures of the king and his officials.

36:19 They set fire to God’s temple and broke down the wall of Jerusalem; they burned all the palaces and destroyed everything of value there.

It is described here that God's temple was burned down and the treasures were taken to a foreign land, Babylon. Judah was embarrassed and defeated on that day. Why did such a tragic day befall the people of Judah? The Bible explains the reason as "the wrath of the Lord was kindled against his people and there was no remedy". So, it was because God had enough of His people's unfaithfulness and unbelief. Therefore, the reason for the destruction of the temple and the biggest, if not the only reason was that the wrath of God finally reached the highest level against the rebellion of God's people.

<The destruction of the temple by the Romans>

Now, history was repeated when the Lord predicted that the temple in Jerusalem will be destroyed by stating in scriptures below.

Matthew 24:1 Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings.

24:2 "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down."

This day, the Lord prophesied that the temple of God which took more than 40 years to build will be destroyed. He mentioned how the temple will be completely destroyed by saying, "Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down." But, why did such a magnificent temple end up getting destroyed?

The reason is just like how it happened in the era of Babylon which was as a result of unbelief and rebellion of the people. The Lord gave a clear warning by using the parable of a farmer.

Mathew 21:33"Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place.

21:34 When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

21:35 “The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third.

21:36 Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way.

21:37 Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said.

21:38 “But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’

21:39 So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

21:40 “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

21:41 “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.”

21:42 Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

“The stone the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone;

the Lord has done this,

and it is marvelous in our eyes’[h]?

21:43 “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit

Just like this farmer’s parable, Jews who were God’s chosen people in this era even killed Jesus who was sent by the Master, and consequently caused the wrath of God. As a result, Israel was violated by Rome and the temple was completely destroyed.

God allowed the destruction of the temple to show the wrath of God against the blasphemous children of God. The devastation to Israel didn't happen by chance, but we have to understand that it was caused by the tremendous degree of the wrath of God.

<The biggest incident in End Times is the destruction of the temple>

As I already mentioned previously, when the Lord talked about the so called "End time prophecy" in Matthew 24, He started with the destruction of the temple. The bible emphasizes the importance of this. Therefore, we need to seriously understand what it means to have the temple destroyed in End Times.

Once again, the destruction of the temple is closely related to the rebellion of God's people. It was the case when both the Babylonian and the Roman temple were destroyed.

Then, what was the reason that Lord mentioned about the destruction of the temple in relation to End Times which is the end of the church era? Generally speaking, it is appropriate to think that it is closely related to the rebellion of God's people (church) in the New Testament era.

This is the truth indeed. Although this is not often mentioned in current churches where they only preach what the congregation want to hear, the Bible clearly prophesies about rebellion of the church in End Times as seen in scriptures below.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.

From those mentioned above, we can imagine that the destruction of the temple in End Times will occur as the result of the wrath of God towards unfaithful children of God who are Christians in the church.

<What the temple tells us>

Now, when we think about the destruction of the temple in End Times, the important point is that the temple no longer exists in Jerusalem since it was destroyed in A.D.70. Worse still, a Muslim temple has been built on where it used to be, so there is no place to build the temple again.

What are we supposed to understand from the fact that the temple the Lord was mentioning doesn't presently exist? My understanding is that through this, God wants us to think about what the destruction of the temple implies rather than the physical disappearance of the temple. What the destruction of the temple implies can be found in the scripture below.

Ephesians 2:20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

2:21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

2:22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

As is written here, the temple is not just a building but represents the church in New Testament era.

<Not one stone will be left>

The Lord mentioned that not one stone will be left on the day of the destruction of the temple seen in scriptures below.

Matthew 24:2 "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down."

Looking at this scripture and Ephesians 2:20 which says "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone", we realize how horrific this prophesy is. This is the prophesy of the destruction of the church which prophesizes that the

teachings of apostle Paul and Peter which are the foundation of the Christian church, words of Isaiah and Jeremiah as well as the teaching of Jesus Christ who is the cornerstone of the church, will be taken away one day. This means the destruction of the fundamental part of Christian doctrine by the End of Days.

I presume that the teachings such as “there is no other way for salvation other than Jesus Christ”, “returning of Jesus”, “His resurrection”, and “forgiveness of sin” will also be taken away.

<There are many scriptures that imply the destruction of the church>

It is by no means ideal to have the day when the fundamental doctrine of Christianity gets destroyed. However, as we understand that the End Day is when the temple and the fundamental doctrine of the church get destroyed, we will come to understand the mystery of many scriptures describing about End Times.

Matthew 24:9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

It is written here that you will be hated by everyone because of Jesus in the End Times. The reason for this is that the church starts to boldly claim Jesus is no longer the savior, someone special, or the Son of God. They will rather start to claim Him to be a member of the occult and a cheat. Therefore His believers are also going to be treated as followers of a cult religion.

Matthew 24:10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other

Why do many people fail to stay faithful and betray other Christians? It is because the doctrine of the church will be destroyed by the End of Days, and what is written in the Bible as well as the teachings of Paul and Jesus will be seen as false.

After understanding this, the strange prophesy of End Times will start to

make sense that it means the destruction of Christian basic doctrine (the temple). Again, there is a reason why the Lord started with the destruction of the temple when talking about End Times. It was the prophesy of the wrath of God towards God's people for their unfaithfulness and unbelief, and the destruction of the foundations of Christian church, basic doctrines and teaching.

Brokenhearted

Today, I would like to talk about what God has been showing to me in the past 10 years.

By the way, the Bible mentions how to receive "eternal life". It may be too familiar, but let's take a look at the scripture.

John 5:39 You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me

Recently, I happened to think, "How can I receive eternal life?" and "What does God want from me?" Then, I recalled the scripture above. It tells us that the answer is in the Bible.

Now, I may have mentioned that I stayed away from the church and my faith for some time before. But with God's grace, I restarted my life as a Christian 10 years ago and since then, I started to seriously think about "eternal life". One day, this scripture from Psalm caught my eyes.

**Psalm 34:18 ; The LORD is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.**

From this scripture, I understood that God cares for the brokenhearted, stays with them and saves them as well. On the other hand, God will not be with hardhearted people and I felt they would not make heaven. So, I started to pray for getting "heartbroken" in my daily life. Since then, God has shown me many important things and I would like to share one of them. It is about "Getting separated from what you are born with". This is also

mentioned in the Bible where Jesus and Nicodemus are having a conversation. Let's have a look.

John 3:1 Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council.

3:2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him."

3:3 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again"

3:4 "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!"

3:5 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.

3:6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit[b] gives birth to spirit.

I want you to read the underlined parts where they say unless they are born again or unless they are born of water and the Spirit. What they are saying here is that whether it is naturally good or bad, unless it gets changed by "water" and "Spirit", you are unable to "see the kingdom of God" and also "enter the kingdom of God". There is nowhere that says "if you attend the church every week and serve there, you can enter the kingdom of God".

It seems that the important thing is to "be born again". Surely, it is important to attend the church service and would be better to serve in some way than not to do anything. But, I wonder if there is more important thing? And that is to leave slowly from what you are "born with". Without doing this, I think that it is impossible to enter the kingdom of God. It is clearly written, "no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again". "no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit."

I think that to become “heartbroken”, you need to eagerly seek to have “what you are born with changed by God”. I have gone through many things in the last 10 years, but I always focused on this and God still keeps reminding me of this. The other part of the Bible describes this as “to get your hearts and ears circumcised”, and as I mentioned before, I think that “circumcision” will be associated with Christians until the end.

I used to think that you have to be someone who leads many people to salvation, preaches the gospel, prophesies, or has the talent of healing to be invited into the kingdom of heaven. Surely, these works are fantastic and you will receive a big reward in heaven. But, the important thing is whether you are able to enter “the kingdom of heaven” or not, and it doesn’t matter how much you show God’s glory if you end up not entering the kingdom of heaven. It is written as below.

“What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ”

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

So, I started thinking seriously about going into “the kingdom of heaven” and I realized that it may be very important to be “brokenhearted” in God’s eye. I think it is about following what God says whether it is ideal for me or not. In fact, I feel so even more convincingly after writing this testimony. As a final note, I would like to leave you with this scripture.

Isaiah 57:15 For this is what the high and exalted One says— he who lives forever, whose name is holy:“I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

May glory and honor be unto to God who always teaches us important lessons.

Amen