

# No Temple But Christ

REVELATION 21:22

“And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”

When the Apostle John was banished to the isle of Patmos, he saw a great many things pertaining to the Day of the LORD. One of the events John saw was the passing away of the first heaven and earth and the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven.

John was carried away in the spirit to see a panoramic view of this incredible sight, describing a magnificent city with all kinds of precious gemstones as foundations, walls of pure jasper, gates of pearl, and streets made of gold so pure that it was transparent.

When John saw the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven, he heard a voice from heaven in Revelation 21:3

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

What we have here is a picture of the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

In this city there is something missing that would shock Jewish people. There is no temple. It's not there. Why? Before we answer that important question, we must ask ourselves, why was there a temple in the O.T. in the first place?

**1. The Temple was the place where God chose to dwell** with His people. . I will dwell among my people said the Lord.

Exodus 25:8

“And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.”

God was actually and visibly there in the Temple with His people.

II Chronicles 5:14

“So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.”

The Shekhinah Glory. In Biblical Hebrew the word means literally *to settle, inhabit, or dwell*, and is used frequently in the Old Testament

Exodus 40:35,

"Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud **rested** [*shakhan*] upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle."

Genesis 9:27,

“God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall **dwell** in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.”

Jeremiah 33:16

“In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall **dwell** safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.”

Jehovah Tsidkenu, The Lord our righteousness is a name of Christ and is used in connection with God's presence among His people.

There was A weekly Shabbat blessing recited in the Temple in Jerusalem which went like this, "May He who causes His name to dwell [*shochan*] in this House, cause to dwell among you love and peace and friendship".

The word for Tabernacle, *mishcan*, is a derivative of the same root and is used in the sense of dwelling-place in the Bible, e.g. Psalm 132:5 ("Before I find a place for God, *mishcanot* (dwelling-places) for the Strong One of Israel.")

Therefore, Shekhinah refers to a dwelling or settling in a special sense, a dwelling or settling of divine presence, to the effect that, while in proximity to the Shekhinah, the connection to God is more readily perceivable.

Oh that the Lord would come down today amongst His people and manifest His special presence in our midst. That we might sense and perceive the Lord is with us.

The Temple was the place where God chose to dwell with His people.

## **2. The Temple was the special place where God heard and answered the prayers of His people.**

That is why Daniel when he prayed in Daniel 6:10 he faced in the direction of the temple in Jerusalem.

Daniel 6:10

“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.”

Hannah the mother of Samuel went to the Temple and prayed to the Lord.

We read in I Samuel 1:9-17

“So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and

not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him.”

The Temple was the special place where God heard and answered the prayers of His people.

Why isn't there a temple now? It is because all of the sacrifices and holy places in the O.T pointed to and are fulfilled in Christ.

Christ is the temple for His people. No more animal sacrifices are needed; no more physical building is needed because Christ is our sacrifice and dwelling place.

Paul warns those in the church in Galatia not to go back and cleave to the rituals and ceremonial laws of the O.T. because they are fulfilled in Christ.

Galatians 4:9

“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?”

Christ identifies Himself as the temple in John 2:18-21, “Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body.

How is Christ our temple?

Christ is the one and only Mediator. Christ's office as mediator comprehends three different functions, viz., those of a prophet, priest, and king. These are not three distinct offices, but three functions of the one office of mediator.

The prophetic mission of Christ was to preach the Gospel. In Romans 1:16 Paul declares “the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Christ sent his disciples forth after he ascended to His Father in heaven to preach the gospel to sinners. This was the message of Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:17 “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel:” This is the message of Heritage Free Presbyterian Church. This is the mission of the FPC denomination.

Question 25 in the Shorter Catechism asks, How doth Christ execute the office of a priest? Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God; and in making continual intercession for us.” This answer was to combat the



blasphemous notion of the Roman Catholic Mass, which is considered a sacramental reenactment of the death and resurrection of Jesus as well as a true sacrifice in which the body and blood of Jesus (the bread and wine) are offered to God.

Christ is King and sovereign Head over his Church and over all things to his Church

Ephesians 1:22

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,”

Colossians 1:18; 2:19

“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

“And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.”

Christ executes this mediatorial kingship in his Church, and over his Church, and over all things in behalf of his Church.

The Temple in the O.T. was the place of mediation. It was required that people worship at the Temple. It was the only place that people could go to worship and meet with the Lord. In the O.T. you couldn't go to your back yard and sacrifice a lamb. It had to be according to the prescribed pattern the Lord laid down for His people to follow in the Temple.

1 Timothy 2:5 “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;”

Scripture does not teach calling on the saints or pleading for help from them. For it sets before us Christ alone as mediator, atoning sacrifice, high priest, and intercessor.

Temple sacrifices are no longer needed because Christ is The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He is that perfect and unblemished sacrifice for sin.

1 Peter 1:19

“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:”

The lamb without blemish points to the sinless Son of God. Christ is our temple and in Him we become a temple where the Holy Spirit resides.

1 Corinthians 6:19

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

1 Peter 2:5

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

There is no Temple but Christ. Is Christ your temple? Have you trusted in His atoning work on the Cross for your sins? Is Christ your Mediator? Your Prophet, your Priest, and your King? May we look to Christ today who is the Temple of His people.

Let us pray!