



**Elder Oscar Mata**

# **DESTROYING THE TEMPLE**

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## **DESTROYING THE TEMPLE**

Before his death, King David provided materials in great abundance for building a temple to God. The Temple of Jerusalem was a sanctuary of the people of Israel, situated on the esplanade of Mount Moriah, in the city of Jerusalem. David commanded his son Solomon building the temple, as what God had commanded.

After 7 years of hard work, the temple was completed approximately the year 989 BC. That temple was filled of the glory of God (*“And the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.”*<sup>1</sup>)

But that joy did not last long, because after the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam reigned in his throne. At the beginning of his reign, the kingdom was divided into two, so he prevailed on only two tribes in the Kingdom of Judah. But Judah did evil in the sight of God, hence, approximately in the year 955 BC, Shishak king of Egypt fought against them and plundered the treasures of the temple.

Approximately in the year 810 BC, Joash the king of Israel invaded the Kingdom of Judah and took all the gold, silver and vessels that were found in the temple. Later, during the reign of Ahaz on Judah, he did evil in the sight of God. Approximately in the year 740 BC, because of the war that Syria was to be done with Judah, Ahaz gave gold and silver of the temple to the king of Assyria to pay his protection of the Syrians. When Hezekiah reigned over Judah, approximately in the year 722 BC, he paid tribute to the king of Assyria, and thus gave him the silver and the doors of the temple with their pillars.

Approximately in the year 597 BC, during the short reign of Joaquin, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon carried out from there all the treasures of the temple and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold. But approximately in the year 586 BC, on Av 7<sup>th</sup>, which is the fifth month, Nebu-zaradan the chief of the executioners from Babylon destroyed the temple that Solomon built with so much effort. The Bible records this tragic event: *“And in the fifth month, on the seventh of the month; it was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; Nebu-zaradan the chief of the executioners, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. And he burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem. And every great one's house he burned with fire. And the bronze pillars in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the bronze sea in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke into pieces and carried the bronze from them to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of bronze with which they ministered, they also took away. And the chief of the executioners took away the fire-pans, and the bowls, that were all of gold, and all of silver; also the two pillars, the one sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD. The bronze of all these vessels was without weight.”*<sup>2</sup> *“The house of our holiness and our beauty, where our fathers praised You, has become a burning of fire; and all our pleasant things are laid waste.”*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 8:11

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings 25:8,9,13-16

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 64:11

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That beautiful temple, which was filled of the glory of God, was reduced to rubbles and the shame faced the peoples, after 403 years of the building. During four centuries, God endured with much long-suffering the sin of the Jews, until their evil brought their ruin.

After the return of the captivity from Babylon, during Medes-Persian Empire, the temple of Jerusalem was rebuilt approximately in the year 417 BC. The Jews celebrated with great enjoy, because again they could to serve God in the temple. That temple was called "Second Temple". But the people continued disobeying to God, and therefore their enemies did prey to them. Approximately in the year 169 BC, Antiochus IV Epiphanes invaded Jerusalem, and plundered this temple.

When Herod the Great became king of Judea, the building had suffered considerably because of natural process as well as the hostile attacks by armies. Herod wanted to obtain the acceptance of Jews, so he commanded rebuild it. The work began approximately in the year 25 BC, and he invested hard work and very much money, filling the temple of splendor. This is the cause what it was called "Temple of Herod". In that temple, our Lord Jesus Christ drove out the merchants who had made it in a den of thieves and business centre. The people remained away from God's will, thus Jesus prophesied this: *"And Jesus went out and departed from the temple. And His disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, There shall not be left here one stone on another that shall not be thrown down."*<sup>4</sup>

That prophecy was fulfilled in the year 70 AC, when Titus the General Roman invaded and destroyed the temple of Jerusalem on Av 9<sup>th</sup> of the Jewish calendar, curiously 2 days after the 656 anniversary of the destruction of the temple of Solomon.

This Friday August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 is Av 7<sup>th</sup>, having elapsed 2594 years since the destruction of the temple of Solomon. On Sunday August 10<sup>th</sup> will be Av 9<sup>th</sup>, 1938 anniversary of the destruction of the Temple of Herod. Faced with such nefarious anniversaries in the history of the people of Israel, it is important to consider that at present, the temple of God is made up of believers in Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:16-17) and the whole Church (Ephesians 2:21).

For the sin of Israel, those majestic temples were destroyed. Whereas every believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit, we must consider that no glory will be enough to stay with dignity faced God, if we persist in to live against His commandments or contaminating this tangible temple with things to dislike God. Let's remember the written in the Word of God: *"If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which you are."*<sup>5</sup>

**Friend, Brothers and Sisters, let's live according to God's will to be true temples to worship in spirit and truth**

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<sup>4</sup> Matthew 24:1-2

<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:17