

Is the Third Temple Imminent?

I have always been a strong supporter of Israel. This is not because I always agree with its secular leadership, which is often as corrupt as America's on seminal Biblical issues like child-killing and sodomy, but because the Bible makes clear that Israel is an intact nation-state at the time of Christ's return. Jesus said in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21) that we would know the season of His return by the revival of the fig tree – the primary Biblical symbol of the House of Judah per Jeremiah 24 and many other passages.

It is the House of Judah (defined by the practice of Judaism) which occupies that relatively small portion of the Holy Land God promised to Abraham which is today called Israel. Eventually, the House of Israel (defined in the Age of the Gentiles by the practice of Christianity) will be restored there as well on an equal basis, according to a little-recognized but pervasive theme of Old Testament prophecy about the last days.

Between now and then, the Antichrist will emerge (2 Thessalonians 2), establish a short-lived kingdom-of-evil based in Israel (Revelation 11), and trigger the outpouring of God's wrath by setting up the "*Abomination that Causes Desolation*" in the "*Holy Place*" (Matthew 24:15). Most scholars identify the "*Holy Place*" as the long-anticipated Third Temple of Jerusalem. In my four trips to Israel, including a church tour I led in 2017, I have twice toured the [Temple Institute](#) which is dedicated to ensuring the temple is built, and has (to precise Biblical standards)...

- 1) prepared all of the implements that will be used there,
- 2) built the altar, and
- 3) trained Levite priests identified by genetic testing.

I think the consensus of Christian prophecy watchers today is that we're very close to that final phase, especially as we watch the secular-controlled Israeli government lead the world in forced "vaccinations," in direct and shocking contravention of the post-Holocaust [Nuremberg Code](#) and against the vehement objection of our spiritual first-cousins, [Orthodox Jews](#). It would seem that the scene is set and we are awaiting only the building of the temple before "*the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness—the son of destruction—is revealed...[who] will seat himself in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God*" (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12),

Missing in most discussions of these matters is the huge significance of a pair of seemingly minor prophecies in Genesis, made by Jacob about his sons Judah and Joseph (Israel), the patriarchs of the two Hebrew houses that alternately ruled the 12 tribes throughout Biblical history.

"The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes and the obedience of the nations shall be his. He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes" (Genesis 49:10-11).

"Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall" (Genesis 49:22).

Just as the House of Judah is represented in scripture by the fig tree, the House of Israel (Joseph), is represented by the vine. We find additional support for this in Isaiah 5:3-7: "*And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge between Me and My vineyard.... For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel.*"

In His first coming, Jesus the Judean "*will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch,*" (literally fulfilled in Matthew 21:1-9) meaning that He becomes intimately related to Israel as His

bride. In His role as Israel's bridegroom and redeemer He also becomes the rescuer of Judah in His second coming. The prophecy "*he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes,*" is an unmistakable reference to His return as conquering king, and to the winepress of His wrath toward His enemies (Revelation 19:6-21).

The fig tree and vine (when taken together) are symbolic of the harmony of the two houses, for example:

- 1 Kings 4:25: "*So Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and his fig tree.*"
- Zech 3:9-10: "*and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.*"
- Micah 4:1-4: "*But in the last days it shall come to pass, that...[under Christ's reign] they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid.*"

But until the **Day of the Lord** (the thousand year "day" of the Millennial Kingdom), there remains a division and rivalry between the two houses – except during King David's fully unifying reign, which is why David is a type of Christ and why Luke 1:32 says "*The Lord God will give Him [Jesus] the throne of His father David.*" Only David and Jesus rule a totally unified and righteous 12-tribe kingdom. (Technically, there was residual two house unity under Solomon, per 1 Kings 4:25, but God stripped him of authority due to grave sin and idolatry per 1 Kings 11:1-13).

But note Genesis 49:10 again. The House of Judah rules only from the establishment of the monarchy "*until Shiloh comes.*" The context also makes clear that "Shiloh" is Jesus Christ.

Shiloh was the home of God's Tabernacle in the territory of Ephraim (Israel per Jeremiah 31:9) and the "capital" of the Holy Land through the era of the Judges, starting with Judge Joshua the Ephraimite. Shiloh is thus symbolic of the authority of the House of Israel in contrast to the authority of the House of Judah (in whose territory – Jerusalem -- resides each successive Temple to God).

When Jesus comes again as "Shiloh," it will be to unite the House of Israel and House of Judah (Ezekiel 37:15-28) in the Holy Land, as the High Priest of a Tabernacle whose authority precedes and is superior to that of the (future) Third Temple in Jerusalem. He will come as described in Revelation 19:6-21: the Bridegroom freshly remarried to the Bride of Christ (House of Israel) in the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, to...

- rescue the House of Judah (Matthew 23:37-39),
- crush the wicked (Zechariah 14:1-9), and
- fulfill the prophecy of Romans 11:25-27 that "all Israel will be saved."

Our hearts should thus not focus on the Temple, but look beyond it until Shiloh comes!