

## Temples

TEXT: Matthew 24:1, “Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.”

THESIS: To define the usage of the word “temple” and to better know the temple that Jesus knew as well as impress upon one another the requirement to set ourselves apart for holy use by God, for Christians are the temple of God.

### INTRODUCTION

1. There are many temples mentioned in the Bible.
  - a. For instance, there were the three Jewish temples, each of which occupied Mt. Moriah at different times in history.
    - i. First there was Solomon’s Temple. King David supplied the materials (1 Chron. 22). It was built by his son, Solomon (1 Kgs. 5). And, destroyed in 587 BC by the Babylonians and its treasures taken (2 Kings 25:8-17).
    - ii. Second there was Zerubbabel’s Temple which began to be built in 536 BC after the Babylon captivity and was worked on over the next 20 years. After that, it repeatedly suffered damage from wars and plundering, including in 63 B.C. and 37 B.C. by the Romans when they took control of Jerusalem.
    - iii. Last there was Herod’s Temple, who in 20 B.C. repaired and expanded the temple. It was completed in A.D. 64, but destroyed in A.D. 70 when Romans destroyed the Jewish rebellion.
  - b. But, there is another temple mentioned: the one where God dwells.
2. Now, there are primarily two Greek words that are translated temple in our Bibles.
  - a. Hieron (hee-er-on) which means the sacred place set aside for a holy use.
    - i. This would have been Herod’s temple with porches, courts, entrances, Holy Place and Holy of Holies as well as the annexes outside the main structure.
    - ii. Basically, the temple and its compound.
  - b. Naos (nah-os) means the inner most chamber of a temple, meaning, if it is a pagan temple, it is where the gold idol was placed.
    - i. In Christianity, it is the sanctuary where God dwells and can be used as a literal dwelling or figuratively.
3. Now, it is important that we understand the word temple and how it is used in the Bible. Therefore, we will be looking at:
  - a. The word, Hieron (hee-er-on)
  - b. The physical temple
  - c. The word Naos (nah-os)
  - d. Problems with Naos (nah-os)

### DISCUSSION:

## I. THE TEMPLE HIERON (hee-er-on)

- A. If we look at the temple, referring to the Hieron (hee-er-on), we will understand what that temple is.
1. Beginning in Luke 2:27, baby Jesus was taken to the temple.
    - a. As a boy, in Lk. 2:46, Jesus stayed behind in the temple when his parents returned home.
    - b. In the life of Jesus, we find in Matt. 4:5 where the devil dared Jesus to jump from the pinnacle of the temple.
  2. In Matt. 21:13 – Jesus driving out the moneychangers from the temple, in vs. 14 he healed the blind and the lame in the temple, and in vs. 23 he taught the people in the temple.
  3. In Matt. 24:1, “And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.”
  4. Matt. 26:55 – Jesus taught daily in the temple.
  5. Luke 18:10 – Jesus told the parable of the Pharisee and the publican who entered the temple to pray.
  6. John 8:20 – Jesus taught in the temple treasury.
  7. John 10:23 – Jesus taught in Solomon’s porch in the temple.
  8. Luke 24:53 – Following the Ascension of Jesus, the apostles returned to Jerusalem and frequented the temple.
  9. Acts 2:46 – The early church continued to make use of the temple rooms.
  10. Acts 3:1-8 – Peter and John went to the temple where they encountered a lame man and healed him.
  11. Acts 5:20 – An angel released the apostles from jail and commanded them to teach in the temple.
  12. Acts 5:42 – The apostles taught and preached daily in the temple.
  13. Acts 21:26 – Paul purified himself in the temple regarding a Jewish vow he fulfilled.
- B. So, the temple was well used.

## II. THE PHYSICAL TEMPLE

- A. Herod’s Temple was a magnificent place and was really the center of everything during the 1<sup>st</sup> century.
1. It contained not only the days of life and ministry of Jesus, but his death and the early church.
  2. The temple was so large that they expanded it on the top of Mt. Moriah through the use of retaining walls which Herod had backfilled or overlaid with stone.
  3. And so, the surface area was roughly 1,000 by 1,000 feet, comprising about 35 acres.
  4. It was connected by a gate and stairs, but just north of this was the fortress of Antonia.
- B. The Porticos as they were called, was the covered porch around the temple.

1. The eastern portico was called Solomon's Porch.
  2. The southern portico was called the Royal Portico.
- C. Now, immediately beyond the porticos was a large open area called the Court of the Gentiles.
1. The rest of the courts and Temple buildings were inside the Court of the Gentiles.
  2. And, there was also a wall of 4½ foot high which contained warnings of the penalty of death to any Gentile who went beyond the wall that enclosed the rest of the Temple mount and its buildings.
- D. Now, the temple also had a Court of the Women on the eastern end of the Temple buildings and was about 200 feet square and its floor was eight feet higher than the Court of the Gentiles.
1. It contained 13 receptacles for coins that looked like inverted trumpets.
  2. At the southeastern corner of this court was the site where ceremonies to conclude a Nazarite vow were conducted.
  3. The eastern access to the Court of the Women was through the Beautiful Gate, which was 65 feet wide and 75 feet tall.
- E. Westward from the Court of the Women was a corridor that was next to the area where the priests offered sacrifices. This court from which the work area of the priests was separated by a small wall was the Court of Israel.
1. The floor of the Court of Israel was 10 feet higher than the Court of the Women.
  2. At the southeastern corner of the Court of Israel was the Hall Gazith where the Sanhedrin met.
- F. The Court of the Priests was on a platform three feet higher than the Court of Israel, between the Court of Israel and the Temple building.
1. The altar of burnt offerings and laver were in the Court of the Priests.
- G. The floor of the platform on which stood the House of God was eight feet higher than the Court of the Priests, or 29 feet higher than the Court of the Gentiles.
1. A porch, several stories high, covered the face of the House of God.
  2. Three story apartments on the north and south sides housed the priests during their annual two-weeks ministry.
  3. Gold plated double doors on the eastern side led to the Holy Place, in which were the table of shewbread, the altar of incense and the golden lamp stand. The Holy Place was 30 feet by 60 feet.
  4. A heavy veil separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, which was a room 30 feet square. Since the Ark of the Covenant was lost since the time of Solomon's Temple, the Holy of Holies was empty except for a marble stone on which the high priest placed his censer on the Day of Atonement.
- H. Events that happened around the temple.
1. Paul was rescued from a murderous mob and taken by Roman soldiers to the temple (Acts 21:34-40).

2. As to Solomon's porch, not only did Jesus teach there, the early church also assembled there (Acts 3:11; 5:12).
3. The Jews set up animal sales for the sacrifices and money exchanging in the Court of the Gentiles (Matt. 21:12-13).
4. Jesus observed how the poor widow and others contributed to the treasury, which was located in the Court of the Women (Mark 12:41-44).
5. Jesus also preached in the Court of the Women (John 8:20).
6. The Sanhedrin convened here to condemn Jesus (Luke 22:66-71).
7. Judas threw the 30 pieces of silver in the temple before the chief priests and elders, before going out to hang himself (Matt. 27:3-5).
8. The Sanhedrin convened there to rebuke the apostles, Peter and John (Acts 4:5-22).
9. All the apostles were captured and brought to the Sanhedrin in the Court of Israel in the temple. (Acts 5:17-42)
10. Stephen was captured and taken before the Sanhedrin in the temple (Acts 6:12-15).
11. At the court of priest, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, was burning incense when the angel, Gabriel, appeared to him (Luke 1:5-10).
12. Jesus cited the murder of a priest between the altar of burnt sacrifice and the Temple (Matt. 23:35).
13. The Veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies was torn from the top to the bottom when Jesus died (Matt. 27:51).

### III. THE TEMPLE, NAOS (nah-os)

- A. The Greek word Naos (nah-os), has emphasis to the presence of deity.
- B. It is the sanctuary where God dwells.
  1. 1 Kings 8:10-11, "it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD."
  2. 2 Chron. 5:13-14, "It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; 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."
  3. 2 Chron. 7:1-2, "when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house."

- C. Now, in Jn. 2:19-21, “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.”
1. Jesus used this word “temple” to refer to his body and that it would be resurrected after three days.
  2. In 1 Cor. 3:16-17, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.
    - a. Here, the body which is the church in which the Holy Spirit dwells is called a temple.
  3. In 1 Cor. 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?”
    - a. The human body in which the Holy Spirit dwells is called a temple.
  4. In Eph. 2:21, “In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:”
    - a. The church is called the temple.
  5. In Rev. 16:17, “the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.”
    - a. The heavenly abode of God is called a temple.
- D. Now, considering these facts, knowing that the word Naos (nah-os) refers to the dwelling place of deity, both the church and individual Christians MUST be holy and set apart for use by God.
1. We must be holy as God is holy.
    - a. “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:15-16).
  2. We do this by ridding ourselves of sinful practices.
    - a. “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice” (Eph. 4:31).
  3. We need to add the Christian virtues.
    - a. In 2 Pet. 1:5-11, “beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never

fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

4. The children of God must think on holy things.
  - a. Paul said, “brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (Phil. 4:8).
5. Both individual Christians and the Lord’s church are obligated to excel in good works.
  - a. “That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;” (1 Tim. 6:18)
  - b. “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Titus 2:14).

#### IV. PROBLEMS WITH NAOS (nah-os)

- A. God will not continue to dwell in his temple when his children forsake him.
  1. This is why many Christians have a difficult time dealing with life.
  2. This is why God’s presence vacated the Jewish temple.
    - a. “the glory of the LORD departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims.” (Ezek. 10:18)
    - b. “The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; they have made a noise in the house of the LORD, as in the day of a solemn feast.” (Lam. 2:7)
      - (1) Why did the Lord leave?
        - (a) They lost God because they rebelled at his will, and held the truth in unrighteousness.
        - (b) Basically as the psalmist put it, “Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned (polluted) his crown *by casting it* to the ground.”
      - (2) To us John penned, “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.” (Rev. 2:5)
  3. Likewise, God will not continue to dwell in either the church or Christians who forsake him.
    - a. Notices the churches in Rev. 2-3 who had problems.
    - b. Remember what Paul wrote, “what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple [nah-os] of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be

their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:16-18).

## CONCLUSION

1. Knowing the difference between these two Greek words for temple: hieron and naos, can help us understand the use of temple.
  - a. Hieron was the physical temple we read about with courts, buildings and porches.
  - b. Regarding the spiritual temple, all Christians are priest and have unlimited access to the spiritual temple whereby holiness is ordered on Christians.
  - c. Thus, we cannot enjoy a special relationship with God if we are not set apart for a holy use and otherwise a fitting dwelling place for deity.
2. Invitation:
  - a. As a child of God, does your temple need a house cleaning?
    - i. A Christian who has sin in their life, are unable to serve as a priest until you are cured of your sin.
    - ii. Heal your blemish of sin through repentance and prayer (Acts 8:22).
    - iii. “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” (2 Cor. 13:5)
  - b. If you are not a child of God, you cannot be a temple in which deity dwells.
    - i. You must hear God’s Word and believe (John 8:24), repent (Acts 17:30), profess Jesus to be the Christ (Acts 8:37). Submit to immersion (Col. 2:12).