



Something Greater
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The Crossing Church
Las Vegas, Nevada

OPENING

This week we are continuing our study in the Gospel of Mark. The encounter we are looking at today is perhaps the most remarkable, verifiable prophecy that Jesus made. It is even better than that. This prophecy would move the worship of God from a place to a movement of people. It signals the greatest shift in how we worship God.

QUESTION: How did you celebrate Fathers' Day?

SCRIPTURE¹

Mark 1:15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Mark 13:1-4 As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!" "Do you see all these great buildings?" replied Jesus. "Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down." As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, "Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?"

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own. You were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.

OBSERVATION

The Israelites equated a place with the presence of God. In the desert during the 1400's B. C., it took the form of a tabernacle which they took with them as they wandered about for forty years. This tent housed the Ark of the Covenant and the people knew that God lived within that tent and was available to them there at any time. Then, 400 years later, King David wanted to provide a permanent place where God's presence would be among the people so he decided to build a magnificent, glorious temple dedicated to Him. But he had a problem when he told God of his plan. Because David was a warrior king who had shed so much blood, God wouldn't allow him to build it. Solomon, David's son by Bathsheba, would have that honor. Then, in 605 B.C., because of the people's rebellion, God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to lay siege to Jerusalem for twenty years. In 586 B. C. he destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and took everything of value. Seventy years after the siege began,² in 535 B. C. the exiles were allowed to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the walls of the city. Eventually, in 516 B. C., the temple was also rebuilt, but it was not the magnificent structure of Solomon's day. Fast forward to King Herod the Great. In 20 B. C., because he wanted to ingratiate himself with the Jewish people, Herod built another magnificent temple like Solomon's. This is the building Jesus prophesied about when He said that every one of its massive stones would be **thrown** down. That event

¹ All scripture is NIV unless otherwise indicated

² Jeremiah 25:11-12, 29:10

actually occurred on August 6th, 70 A. D., 40 years after the prophecy, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. The diaspora -- the dispersing of the Jewish people throughout the world -- had begun.

QUESTION: Tell us what you have read about the building of the next temple? Do you believe the Rapture won't happen until it is built? Why/why not? Where do you think the Ark of the Covenant is today?

QUESTION: Whom do you believe was the greatest prophet of them all? Which of the prophets have you studied? Discuss some of their prophecies that have proven to be true.

APPLICATION

Today, the Jewish people are waiting expectantly for the time when they can build the temple again because they believe it will usher in their Messiah. They don't understand that He, in the person of Jesus, had already come and that He would end the concept of limiting God to a building. That's why the last thing Jesus told His disciples to do was to leave Jerusalem and go to people of all nations and share His good news.³

QUESTION: In what ways have you answered Jesus' call to go into the whole world and tell His good news?

The arrival of Jesus signaled an end to a sacred place. He was introducing something greater -- the beginning of a sacred people. He was ending a religion that was centered around a building and ushering in a relationship with people. We are now the temple of God and, more explicitly, our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. God has left the building and now lives within us.

QUESTION: Pastor Shane tells us the context of this scripture involves sexual purity. In what other ways do we honor God with our bodies?

There are three applications for us in these scriptures: **I. The building is not sacred.** What makes a place holy is the presence of God. Over the past three months our mission has gone forward without a building. This is because the church is the people who go into our community and support the charities and people we love.

II. We are sacred. This sounds sacrilegious, doesn't it? But, if the presence of God makes a place holy, then His presence within us makes us holy, too. Sometimes we think that this can't be true of us -- we are still so broken and disobedient, but that is not how God sees us. He takes joy in us when we serve others in His name and are generous with our time and money. If we could just internalize this fact of grace, we could do so much more for Him moving forward. **III. Every person we come in contact with is sacred, too.** Wow! This is a shocker to most of us! When we don't truly understand this concept, racism, sexism and classism continue to have power. God is saying that we have to stand up for any person who is mistreated or shown a lack of dignity or is hurt in any way by others, because in Jesus' kingdom the highest value is love. The presence of the Holy spirit in our lives gives us everything we need to follow God's command in this area.

QUESTION: In what ways do these three applications speak to you?

QUESTION: If you believe that every person you interact with is sacred, how does that impact your behavior toward others?

The people to our left and right are more sacred to God than any building we will ever visit. We encounter the sacred ones every day -- we are married to them; we are raising them; we work for and with them. Jesus' invitation to everyone is **FOLLOW ME!** We need to tell others that following Jesus brings life, meaning and purpose. Who wouldn't want that? Who could resist that? Who could fear that? We follow Jesus because He has demonstrated that He is faithful in all circumstances and has brought something greater to the world.

QUESTION: How do you know when God is speaking to you through the Holy Spirit who lives within you? What is your reaction to those experiences?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we are living in a time of something greater -- Your Holy Spirit within us. Although we love being together and worshipping You in our buildings, You are a much bigger God with so much more of Your presence and wisdom to share with us from within. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

³ Acts 1



QUESTIONS

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QUESTIONS YOU MAY WANT TO ADD

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