



EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE VISION—IS IT A LITERAL PROMISE OF A THIRD TEMPLE, OR WHAT “MIGHT HAVE BEEN” IF ISRAEL HAD REPENTED AND OBEYED THE LORD?

Ezekiel was born around the year 622 BC and began his ministry at the age of 30, or about 592 BC. Ezekiel was 50 years old when he had his final vision. On the basis of dates given in the Book of Ezekiel, Ezekiel's span of prophecies can be calculated to have occurred over the course of about 22 years. The last dated words of Ezekiel date to April 570 BC.



The book of Ezekiel closes (chapters 40-48) with a vision of a temple and its associated priestly rituals and a promise of an expanded geographic Israel---**IF** Israel follows God's commands, repents ***and are ashamed of their actions***. In Ezekiel chapter 40, the prophet is transported in vision from his home among the exiles in Babylon to Israel, where a divine messenger holding a measuring rod appears to him. The messenger gives Ezekiel a tour of the temple, measuring the various walls, gates, and courts.

The glory of the Lord, which was seen departing from the temple in an earlier vision in chapter 10, is seen returning to inhabit the temple (43:1-4). In Ezekiel chapters 47 and 48 the boundaries of a greatly expanded Israel are given. Is this a prophecy, a command, or a “what if?” It is a “what If?” Ezekiel 43: 10-11 makes clear this is conditional. A temple may be built, but Jesus is the true temple.

“Son of man, describe the temple to the people of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their sins. Let them consider its perfection, and if they are ashamed of all they have done, make known to them the design of the temple—its arrangement, its exits and entrances—its whole design and all its regulations and laws.” Ezekiel 43: 10-11 (NIV)

Later Ezekiel chapters describe various sacrificial rituals performed by priests. Special attention is given to the role of one who is referred to as “the prince.” The prince cannot be Jesus since the prince gives a sin offering for himself (Ezekiel 45:22), has biological sons (Ezekiel 46:18), and dies to leave an inheritance to his sons (Ezekiel 46:16). Near the end, an ever larger river is seen flowing out of the temple from under the threshold. The book closes with portions of the land assigned to various tribes.

Biblical scholars acknowledge that the temple vision, which occupies the last nine chapters of Ezekiel, presents special challenges in its interpretation. Many prophecy experts have even described it as “the most difficult passages in the Old Testament.”

As with the descriptions in Exodus of the tabernacle and its furnishings, many readers will find this section of Ezekiel tedious, due to its many arcane details, but this is not the greatest difficulty presented by these chapters. By far, the greater difficulty has to do with identifying the time and manner of the fulfillment of the vision.

Is It Solomon’s Temple? When Ezekiel saw the vision (about 573 BC), there was no temple standing in Jerusalem. Solomon’s temple, which had previously stood there, had been destroyed 13 years earlier by Nebuchadnezzar, when he conquered Jerusalem and deported the citizens to Babylon. This means that Ezekiel was not seeing Solomon’s temple, or any temple that was actually standing at the time. What temple, then, was he shown? What were the “conditions” for a new temple to be like this?

Is It Zerubbabel’s Temple? Perhaps the answer that first comes to mind would be that this was the temple that came to be built, under the leadership of Zerubbabel, on the return of the Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem. However, this solution seems to be ruled out by the fact that Zerubbabel’s temple ended up being much smaller, and less elaborate, than the one Ezekiel describes. If Ezekiel was prophesying that the temple built by the returning exiles would fit this description, the prophecy failed to come true. This option does not commend itself to those who accept the inspiration of Scripture. Other interpretations, therefore, have been offered by dispensational scholars.

Is It the Church? Some Christian commentators have understood the content of these chapters as an apocalyptic vision, which is best interpreted spiritually. They point out that the church, in the New Testament, is often referred to as God’s “temple” or habitation. Each Christian is a “living stone” (1 Pet. 2:5), built, along with others, “upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (Eph. 2:20) into a “temple of God” (1 Cor. 3:16).

On this view, the features of temple worship—priests, altars, sacrifices, blood rituals—would be seen as pertaining to spiritual, rather than literal, realities, and applied to our worship of God in the present time. In particular, the description of the river, in chapter 47, would seem to support a nonliteral interpretation. If this is the correct view, we would be required either to see many of the tedious details as being either superfluous or as corresponding to spiritual ideas that would be very difficult to identify with confidence.

Is It the Millennial Temple? Another view of this vision, commonly held among dispensationalists, is that Ezekiel’s temple will be established after the second coming of Christ and will serve as the worship center for all people during the “millennium.” On this view, the one described as “the prince” is often identified as Christ Himself, ruling over the millennial kingdom. But the prince cannot be Christ, for reasons as outlined above.

Choosing an Interpretive Hermeneutical Strategy. In choosing among these options, we are compelled to decide between differing hermeneutical priorities. One of the chief hermeneutical principles recommended by dispensationalist scholars is that of maintaining a literal interpretation. Literal interpretation must also be placed in context of the passages around the Scripture.

This would mean that “spiritualizing” the text must be seen as a departure from the most faithful handling of Scripture. Therefore, dispensationalists argue for a literal, physical building to be established in fulfillment of Ezekiel’s vision. Since the temple erected after Ezekiel’s time did not fit Ezekiel’s description, they believe that there must be another temple in the future that will do so more admirably. But we must also take the condition literally!!

Scripture Best Interprets Scripture--Use the New Testament to Understand the Old Testament Prophecy

The best interpretation of Scripture is Scripture. Since Jesus himself gave direct interpretation of Old Testament prophecy to the Apostles, their New Testament writings are the best source to help us understand Old Testament prophecy. Why would someone say that and still try to prove a point from it using Old Testament verses? It’s as if they’re reading the New Testament through the lens of the Old. We should read the Old Testament through the lens of the New Testament.

The most obvious problem presented here is that the book of Hebrews (e.g., 10:1–18) speaks of the death of Christ on the cross as a termination of the efficacy of bloody animal sacrifices, such as those Israel offered in the temple. If Ezekiel’s vision applies to a future time, why do we again find the offering of animal sacrifices?

The dispensationalist answer is that the millennial sacrifices will not be intended to atone for sins. The blood of Christ precludes any need for that. Just as the Old Testament sacrifices *anticipated* the death of Christ as a future event, it is suggested the future millennial sacrifices will *commemorate* the death of Christ as a past event.

The text of Ezekiel, however, seems to preclude this, since the various offerings in the temple are said to “make atonement for the house of Israel” (45:17). Thus, the sacrifices are presented as an atonement for sin, not as a memorial. Christ Himself recommended the use of wine and bread to commemorate His death (1 Cor. 11:24–26). Why would God replace this with animal sacrifices in which God never found any particular pleasure (Ps. 40:6; 51:16; Heb. 10:6)?

Further, Ezekiel says that “the prince” will offer a sin offering “for himself and for all the people” (45:22). ***If the prince is required to offer sacrifices for his own sins, this would militate against any theory that identifies him with Christ, who never sinned.***

Other objections to the idea that Ezekiel’s vision describes a worship economy to be established in the future would include the following:

- The vision presents a centralized worship in a specified geographical place. In the Old Testament, people were expected to approach the tabernacle, or (later) the temple, for this purpose (Deut. 12:5, 11). Jesus, however, announced to the Samaritan woman that the time of centralized worship was soon to end and to be replaced with spiritual worship, which does not depend on being in any particular place (John 4:21–24; cf. Acts 7:48–50).
- In Ezekiel’s vision, the Levites and Aaronic priesthood are seen in their former places of service. According to the New Testament, there has been a change of the priesthood (Heb. 7:12). The Jewish priesthood has been replaced by a different priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5) and a non-Aaronic high priest (Jesus). This modification will not be reversed, for Christ is said to be “a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek” (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 7:17, 21).

Literal Interpretation? While the difficulties of the dispensational interpretation seem insurmountable, its only strength lies in its hermeneutic of literal interpretation. There is another hermeneutic principle, however, that overrides literalism—namely, the superior revelation given in Christ.

Hebrews 1:1–3 affirms that, while God spoke to Israel through various prophets in the past, the revelation that has come through Christ is more comprehensive because He is no mere prophet, but “the brightness of [God’s] glory and the express image of His person.” The New Testament is not a mere appendix added to the writings of the Old Testament prophets. It is a revelation of the new order in Jesus Christ, in whom all previous revelation finds its fulfillment, and through whom all previous revelation must be understood.

Christ opened the understanding of His disciples so that they “might understand the [Old Testament] scriptures” (Luke 24:45). This being the case, it would be foolish for us to seek a meaning of the prophets contrary to that which Christ and the apostles taught. It is their witness that provides the strongest objections to any literalistic interpretation of Ezekiel 40–48. In Christ’s new order (which, unlike the old order, is permanent), the temple, priesthood, and sacrifices are likewise spiritual (1 Pet. 2:5).

Making Sense of the Vision. How then are we to understand the temple vision? If we look at it literally—the first literal passage to understand is the “condition” expressed in Ezekiel 43: 10-12. First, one might reasonably literally refer to the vision as that which “might have been,” had the Jewish exiles in Babylon exhibited true repentance. This is documented by Ezra, Malachi and Haggai. There is a strong indication that the realization of this vision in Israel’s future was contingent on the people being sufficiently ashamed, or repentant, of their past sins:

“Son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. **“And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple” (Ezekiel 43:10–11).**

Ezekiel 43: 6-12 (NIV)

While the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speaking to me from inside the temple. He said: “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever. The people of Israel will never again defile my holy name—neither they nor their kings—by their prostitution and the funeral offerings[b] for their kings at their death.[c] When they placed their threshold next to my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them, they defiled my holy name by their detestable practices. So I destroyed them in my anger. Now let them put away from me their prostitution and the funeral offerings for their kings, and I will live among them forever. “Son of man, describe the temple to the people of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their sins. Let them consider its perfection, and if they are ashamed of all they have done, make known to them the design of the temple—its arrangement, its exits and

entrances—its whole design and all its regulations[d] and laws. Write these down before them so that they may be faithful to its design and follow all its regulations

(b) Ezekiel 43:7 Or ***the memorial monuments***; also in verse 9

(c) Ezekiel 43:7 Or ***their high places***

(d) Ezekiel 43:11 Some Hebrew manuscripts and Septuagint; most Hebrew manuscripts ***regulations and its whole design***

The response of the Jews to their opportunity to return and to rebuild their temple was sinful. They were not ashamed and did not repent. Only a small remnant opted even to return to Jerusalem, while the rest were content to remain in Babylon. Many of the ones who came back quickly sinned as Ezra, Malachi and Haggai recorded. As a result, the temple they built proved to be inferior to the one that Ezekiel described had they followed God's commands.

We first learn that the people were not ashamed from the prophet Haggai. (Haggai began his ministry about 16 years after the return of the Jews to Judah from exile around 520 BC.)

Haggai 1: 2-11 (NIV)

This is what the Lord Almighty says: “These people say, ‘The time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord’s house.’” Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: “Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?”

Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.”

This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways. Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored,” says the Lord. “You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?” declares the Lord Almighty. “Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house. Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil and everything else the ground produces, on people and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands.”

We also learn from the prophet Malachi that the people were not ashamed. (Malachi was written around the year 500 BC--also after the return from exile).

Malachi 2: 1-9 (NIV)

"And now, you priests, this warning is for you. If you do not listen, and if you do not resolve to honor my name," says the Lord Almighty, "I will send a curse on you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not resolved to honor me.

"Because of you I will rebuke your descendants; I will smear on your faces the dung from your festival sacrifices, and you will be carried off with it. And you will know that I have sent you this warning so that my covenant with Levi may continue," says the Lord Almighty.

"My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name. 6 True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin.

"For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, because he is the messenger of the Lord Almighty and people seek instruction from his mouth. But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi," says the Lord Almighty.

"So I have caused you to be despised and humiliated before all the people, because you have not followed my ways but have shown partiality in matters of the law."

Ezra (writing after Malachi and Haggai) makes clear the people have greatly sinned after coming from exile. (Ezra came to Jerusalem "in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the King". The text does not specify whether the king in the passage refers to Artaxerxes I (465-424 BCE) or to Artaxerxes II (404-359 BCE). Most scholars hold that Ezra lived during the rule of Artaxerxes I.)

Ezra 9: 1-15 (NIV)

After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, "The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled

the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness.” When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled. Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice.

Then, at the evening sacrifice, I rose from my self-abasement, with my tunic and cloak torn, and fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the Lord my God and prayed: “I am too ashamed and disgraced, my God, to lift up my face to you, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. From the days of our ancestors until now, our guilt has been great. Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today.”

“But now, for a brief moment, the Lord our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem.”

“But now, our God, what can we say after this? For we have forsaken the commands you gave through your servants the prophets when you said: ‘The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance.’”

“What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins deserved and have given us a remnant like this. Shall we then break your commands again and intermarry with the peoples who commit such detestable practices?” “Would you not be angry enough with us to destroy us, leaving us no remnant or survivor? Lord, the God of Israel, you are righteous! We are left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence.”

WILL A THIRD TEMPLE BE BUILT? IF SO, WHAT TYPE OF TEMPLE WILL BE BUILT?

It is possible that some type of end times' temple might be built-but most likely without the full promises of Ezekiel. In terms of salvation it will be in vain. There is no sacrifice other than that of Jesus which is pleasing to God. Only Jesus has taken away our sins.

Isaiah 1:11-13 (NIV)

"The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?" says the Lord. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; **I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.** When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? **Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me.**"

Ezra, Haggai and Malachi make clear that the returning Jews did not meet the conditions to have such a temple as Ezekiel's, the pattern preserved in Ezekiel's prophecy stands as a description of an intended order, which, had it materialized, would have testified, as the tabernacle once did, as a type and shadow of "heavenly things" (Hebrews 8:5)—the new order in Jesus Christ. This, we may assume, was the long-term purpose served by the vision.

Though some features of the vision were probably intended symbolically from the start (e.g., the seemingly miraculous, ever-deepening river is a clear symbol of the life-giving water from Christ—see Revelation 22:1-4), it is probable that the beautiful temple, its rituals, the presence of God, and the promised expansion of Israel's territory would have been literally instituted, as here described, if Israel met God's conditions.

Revelation 22: 1-4 (NIV)

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

Whether or not the temple had ever actually been rebuilt, the new revelation in Christ encourages us to see its pattern as having been fulfilled in Jesus Christ Himself, who is the final atoning sacrifice and the eternal high priest of God's people.

PAUL WRITES TO THE THESSALONIAN CHURCH

THE MAN OF LAWLESSNESS WILL BE REVEALED

The First Letter from the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians was likely the first written letter of the New Testament in the Bible. Most scholars believe Paul wrote First Thessalonians in 51 AD, and Second Thessalonians from Corinth within months of writing the first letter, around 51-52 AD. Paul wrote these letters after his unsuccessful preaching in Arabia, but successful preaching elsewhere.

The purpose of the second letter was to prepare Christians for the return of Christ. Christians apparently believed that it was useless to work because the end of the world was close at hand. Paul's second letter explained that the final day will not arrive until sometime after the man of lawlessness is revealed and proclaims himself God. Christians must consequently continue "to earn their own living" (2 Thessalonians 3:12), as did Paul himself in Thessalonica, who "did not eat any one's bread without paying" (2 Thessalonians 3:8). The letter contains a whole chapter regarding the second advent of Christ, among other themes and instructions.

From the inference of 2:1–2, the Thessalonians were faced with a false teaching, saying that Christ had already returned. This error is corrected in chapter 2 (2:1–12), where Paul tells the Thessalonians what must occur before Christ's return.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 (NIV)

Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

Paul says in First Corinthians we are the temple. Satan wants to be worshipped in the hearts of deceived people. The man of lawlessness (Satan) does not enter the physical temple in Jerusalem. Satan wants to be in people's hearts.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NIV)

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

Seeing as how this series of events had not yet happened in the time of Paul, his argument reads, Christ cannot have returned yet. He then expresses thanks that his readers were the elect of God, chosen for salvation and saved by His grace through faith, and thus not susceptible to the coming deception of the "Rebellion", or "Great Falling Away" in 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4.

HOW IS THE “MAN OF LAWLESSNESS” TO BE REVEALED AND ENTER THE “TEMPLE”?

Paul in Second Thessalonians tell us clearly the Man of Lawlessness (Satan) will be revealed and enter the temple. This occurs sometime in the future for Paul, and only after this happens will Christ return. Later after Paul, Satan physically appeared to Mohammad many times from 610 to 632 and gave a false doctrine of Jesus.

2nd Thessalonians 2: 3-4 (NIV)

“Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day [meaning Christ’s return] will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.”



When Satan appeared to Mohammad in 610-632, he tried to enter the spiritual temple of God’s people (Luke 17:20-25) when he declared “Allah as the only God” to Mohammad. Satan also declared to Mohammad Jesus was not God and was not crucified! Satan tries to take away the atoning sacrifice of Jesus. Islam then conquered many Christian lands. Or will Satan appear again and enter a physical rebuilt temple?

The most likely answer is that this prophecy has been fulfilled with the spirit giving Mohammad a false gospel—the Koran. The spirit tried to enter the human temple and take away God’s sacrifice.

THE FALSE PROPHET OF REVELATION

People are often told the False Prophet of Revelation is a future “antichrist.” They have been taught the False Prophet will lead an end-times war and rebellion occurring during the Day of the Lord-- when the final trumpet sounds and Jesus Christ returns. However, there is nothing in Revelation that says the False Prophet leads any such battle. In fact, Revelation does not say the False Prophet is even alive at the end-times. An antichrist is anyone who opposes Jesus as the Son of God (1 John 4: 1-6), and the ultimate antichrist is Satan.

This individual in Revelation is referred to as "the second beast of the earth" (Revelation 13:11-18), as well as the "False Prophet" with demonic messages and spirits from his mouth (Revelation 16:13). In both Revelation 19:20 and 20:10, John is told the False Prophet is thrown in the lake of fire at the time of Christ's return. He must deceive a lot of people to receive such special wrath from Jesus Christ!

Revelation says the False Prophet does five things:

1. The False Prophet will attempt to look like, claim to be connected to, or associated in some way to the lamb (Revelation 13:11)
2. The False Prophet deceives the world. (Revelation 13:14)
3. The False Prophet sets up an image of false worship to the false god. (Revelation 13:14-15)
4. The False Prophet creates a mark, or statement of faith, to the false god. (Revelation 13:16-18)
5. Demonic spirits and messages come out of the False Prophet mouth. (Revelation 16:13-14)

Revelation chapter 19 is where many people think the False Prophet leads a final battle against Jesus. But the False Prophet is not present at the battle. John is only able to see the beast and the kings gathered together. **He cannot see the False Prophet in the battle.** Mohammad died in 632 and has been dead for nearly 1,400 years, but his demonic presence is everywhere. The reason John cannot see the False Prophet is because he is not physically there in the end-times. But, after the final battle on the Day of the Lord, the False Prophet is severely punished by Jesus on the day of judgment.

Revelation 19: 19-21 (NIV)

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

JESUS WARNED THE FALSE PROPHET MIGHT TRY TO ASSOCIATE HIMSELF WITH THE LAMB

Jesus warns In Revelation 13:11 the False Prophet will try to be connected in some way to the lamb. In the Gospel of John (chapters 14 and 16), Jesus also speaks about the coming of the “Spirit of Truth”, ‘Paraclete’ or “Advocate” (in Greek, “parakletos”). For many centuries, Muslim interpreters have consistently seen Mohammad as this “Spirit of Truth,” promised by Jesus, based on a passage from the Koran. Since Mohammad is the False Prophet, this is how he is associated with the lamb warning given in Revelation 13:11.

Revelation 13:11 (NIV)

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. It had two horns like those of a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon.

John 16:12-15 (NIV)

“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”



Muslims consistently say Jesus promised Mohammad would follow him, and cite John 16:13 (“The Spirit of Truth”) as proof. That Jesus promised Mohammad is a common teaching in Islam. Therefore Revelation 13:11 warns us that the False Prophet will attempt to look like the lamb, be connected to, or be associated with the lamb. Of course, Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit, not a person. In the Koran (61:6) Jesus (the Islamic prophet) supposedly predicts the coming of a future prophet after him named Ahmad. Ahmad is another name for Mohammad.

Koran 61:6

Jesus, the son of Mary, said “O Children of Israel! Truly I am the Messenger of God unto you, confirming that which came before me in the Torah and bearing glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me whose name is Ahmad.”

Ahmad, (Greek “parakleton”) which is another name for Mohammad, is very close etymologically to the New Testament Greek word, “parakletos”, so Muslims claim the Koran validates that Jesus in the Gospel of John predicts Mohammad. Since Jesus refers to the Spirit of Truth as “he” and “him”, Muslims see this as a man.

The Gospel of John, chapters 14 through 16, make clear the Spirit of Truth is the Holy Spirit, not a man. Jesus says the Spirit will ***“be with you forever”*** (John 14:16), and ***“will be in you”*** (John 14:17). In Acts 1:5 we also learn that the disciples would see him in their lifetime ***“in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit”***, while Mohammad did not appear until some 550 years later. Mohammad cannot be the Spirit of Truth. It is a deception.

ONLY MOHAMMAD MEETS THE FIVE REVELATION CRITERIA OF THE FALSE PROPHET

If we take the true definition of a False Prophet, it must be someone has been claiming to speak for a false god. According to Revelation, this person must have: 1) be associated with lamb, 2) deceived the world, 3) set up an image of false worship to the false God, 4) given a mark, or statement of faith, to worship the false God, and 5) he must also have a message with demonic words and spirits coming out of his mouth.

There is only one person who exactly matches these five criteria. It is the messenger of Allah, Mohammad. Mohammad never claimed to give real prophecy, but instead claimed to be the messenger of Allah. Islam says Jesus promised Mohammad would follow him. Mohammad claimed to perform signs and wonders. But more importantly, Mohammad set up the image of false worship by placing the Blackstone in the Kaaba at Mecca.

Mohammad directed that all Islamic prayer five times a day be towards the Kaaba image. Mohammad gave the Shahada, the Islamic statement of faith, and gave the instructions that every dying Muslim must say the Shahada with their last breath. By doing so they deny Jesus is the Son of God. ***Since 610 Mohammad has taken nearly five billion souls down the wrong path.*** No one else in history has come even close to doing so much spiritual damage.

Mohammad received all the revelations from Allah to create the Koranic writings. These writings deny Jesus is the Son of God, deny the crucifixion and resurrection, and block the only redemptive path to the true God. Since they deny Jesus is the Son of God, they are therefore from an antichrist. They are from Satan. Mohammad was taken on the night journey to Jerusalem and landed on Mount Moriah to create the Dome of the Rock, the abomination in the outer court on the Temple Mount that proclaims Jesus is not God.

THE TWO ISLAMIC ABOMINATIONS MUST BE REMOVED TO BUILD A THIRD TEMPLE

It is likely after Ezekiel's prophecy of the latter days' war with the Islamic countries (Ezekiel 38-39), Israel may remove the Islamic abominations from the Temple Mount—the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque. Israel will then be able to build a temple, but not to the grand scale of Ezekiel's since they were not ashamed. Only a Jewish remnant will understand that they are not saved by temple sacrificial rituals, but only by the blood of Christ—the Son of God.

Daniel was taken captive in 605 BC as part of the Babylonian captivity of Israel. Daniel finished his work around the year 530 BC, shortly after the capture of Babylon by Cyrus of Persia in 539 BC. In the book of Daniel (Daniel 11:36-45 and 7:23-25) he sees a future king who treats the Holy People very badly. This King defeats three kings and changes the set times and laws. Umar matches all 31 of Daniel's prophecies.

This king has many battlefield conquests and invades the Holy Land. Today many people think this king is still in the future (perhaps the "Antichrist"), but almost certainly Daniel was writing about the second Muslim caliph after Mohammad named Umar. Daniel wrote this 1,200 years before Umar. Umar set up the abominations in the middle of the seven (at 706 AD with the final seven of $360 \times 7 = 2520$ OT years, lasting between 536 BC and 1948).

Historically Christians had built churches throughout the Holy Land. Yet Christians refused to build anything on the Holy Temple site. Umar immediately saw this as an opportunity. Umar confiscated the empty Temple Mount lot (the Beautiful Holy Mountain) and ordered two abominations set up, the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. They were completed after Umar's death.

Umar Ordered Two Abominations Set Up on God's Holy Mountain



Dome of the Rock in Outer Court



Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Wing

JESUS IS THE TRUE TEMPLE AND THE LIVING RIVER OF WATER ONLY THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS MATTERS

John 2:18-22 (NIV)

The Jews then responded to him, “What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” They replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?” But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

Hebrews 1:8-9 (NIV)

But about the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

Hebrews 7:17-22 (NIV)

For it is declared: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.” The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God. And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever.’” Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.

John 4:9-14 (NIV)

The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”

“Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?” Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

Matthew 12:6-8 (NIV)

"I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Luke 17:20-25 (NIV)

Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst." Then he said to his disciples, "The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. People will tell you, 'There he is!' or 'Here he is!' Do not go running off after them. For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation."

Revelation 21:22-27 (NIV)

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Isaiah 1:11-13 (NIV)

"The multitude of your sacrifices—
what are they to me?" says the Lord.
"I have more than enough of burnt offerings,
of rams and the fat of fattened animals;
I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats."

When you come to appear before me,
who has asked this of you,
this trampling of my courts?

Stop bringing meaningless offerings!
Your incense is detestable to me.