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Dear Associates and Friends,

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This month's article is Dr. Ernest L. Martin's presentation of "[The Book of Zechariah](#)," the 11th of the Twelve Minor Prophets. One feature of Zechariah's prophecies is the extensive and complex intertextuality with other biblical material, such as prophecies in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other of the Minor Prophets, especially with Haggai (Zechariah's contemporary).

The Book of Zechariah is greatly concerned with the rebuilding of the Temple, both in Zechariah's day, and also in our future. Note this statement in the first verse of Zechariah chapter 12:

"The burden [or, the load] of the word of YHWH for Israel, says YHWH, which [1] stretches forth the heavens, and [2] lays the foundation of the earth, and [3] forms the spirit of man [adam] within him."

• ***Zechariah 12:1***

This one verse reminds us that YHWH (God the Father) first created the heavens and stretched them out (and that continues even now). Second, in the past He laid **"the foundation of the earth."** Third, He "forms" (continually) the spirit of man within all living human beings (signified by the use of *adam*).¹ God's attributes are succinctly described, from the macro of the vast expanse of the heavens to the micro of the heart-beat and mind of each one of us.

Zechariah 12:1 introduces and presents the "little apocalypse" of Zechariah chapters 12, 13, and 14. These chapters are a single continuous narrative of future events told from Zechariah 12:2 to the end of chapter 14, and as Dr. Martin explains, those chapters are related to and expand on earlier chapters 9, 10, and 11. These matters need to be examined closely.

Rebuilding the Temple

I want to focus briefly on present-day desires to rebuild the Temple. Many Christians around the world know that a Temple of the Jews will exist just before Christ returns. The Jews will build the Temple. At present, most Jews think it a very bad idea to rebuild the Temple.² As Dr. Martin's research shows, those who desire to rebuild the Temple, have the wrong location.

A major step in rebuilding any Temple is laying the cornerstone or foundation stone of the Temple. Several organizations are looking to do so. Here is the *Jewish Encyclopedia* understanding:

"In Ezra 3:10-11 the solemnities at the laying of the corner-stone of the Second Temple by Zerubbabel are detailed (see also Haggai 2:15, 18-23, and Zechariah 3:9, 4:9-10, 8:9). Indeed, the exilic seer must have been familiar with solemn corner-stone rites when picturing the rebuilding of Jerusalem. (Isaiah 54:11; compare 2:1), just as Isaiah was when predicting a new and 'tried and precious corner-stone of sure foundation' for Zion (Isaiah 28:16 et seq.; compare 14:32, Hebrew)."

• **["CORNER-STONE," 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia](#)**

¹ The spirits of all human beings who have died are with God (Ecclesiastes 3:21, 12:7), but are not conscious in any way, **"the dead know not any thing ..."** (Ecclesiastes 9:5). Their spirits are, to use a colloquial phrase, stored "on the shelf" until resurrected to physical or spiritual life. When they are "embodied," then their consciousness will resume.

² There have been attempts in ancient times to rebuild the Temple after 70 AD. All failed.

As Dr. Martin explains in this month's presentation, God, through the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, required a cornerstone to be laid in the 6th century BC, and He will require a cornerstone be laid for the future Temple. In fact, a specific day is indicated in prophecy when that event will happen (although we do not know the year). When it occurs, then blessings will begin for Jerusalem and the Jewish (Israelite) people.

In 1982, three groups of devout Jews combined to plan for and build the Third Temple: The Jerusalem Temple Foundation, To the Mountain of the Lord, and The Faithful of the Temple Mount (now known as the "Temple Mount Faithful"). A fourth group, The Temple Institute, has begun to construct sacred vessels and vestments for the religious rituals.³ There may be other organizations as well, such as the reestablished Sanhedrin. Will any of these groups have authority to do what they desire to do? We cannot know.

The prophecies of Haggai, Zechariah, and Revelation chapter 11 all indicate that two witnesses will have a large part to play in the decisions regarding construction of the next Temple. Location, plans, water systems, construction technique, sacrifices, implements, vestments, and many other important decisions need to be made. Who the two witnesses will work with regarding interested groups, governments, religious groups, political groups, everyone will seemingly want to be involved in every decision. The two witnesses will have great authority to make the thousands of necessary religious and political decisions.

Dr. Martin's article gives you fascinating information about what needs to be done, and what will be done, before a new Temple is built. **Decades could (and likely will) pass** before Temple construction even begins. More decades will pass before the Temple can be dedicated and sacrifices would begin. Most people do not even acknowledge the correct site of the Temple. It will take time for them to (1) learn the truth, (2) acknowledge the truth, and (3) act on the truth that the Temples were located above and west of the Gihon Spring at the City of David. As Dr. Martin shows, God will need to act before basic steps toward the next Temple begin. The problems are so complex, only God can change minds for man to act.

Thank You

The information available at the ASK website is not unique. Everything presented is available elsewhere — especially the biblical information, which scholars have hashed through since the time of the apostles. Indeed, if each of us knew the Bible well enough and understood our personal preconceptions, perspectives, and biases, few of us would need teachers.

Dr. Martin's biblical and scholarly perspective helped him understand and minimize theological and historical preconceptions and biases in his research, study, and presentations of the truths of God. His conclusions came through the hard slog of scholarly grunt-work.

I often say the resources and presentation of ASK material are unique, even if the information is not. The straightforward presentations by Dr. Martin, which I try to emulate, have found a small word-of-mouth growth of our audience. If I were new to ASK I would be thrilled and fascinated by the wide range of topics, all presented with a point of view that is as unbiased as you can find anywhere.

As our loyal snailmail audience diminishes due to age, new people are brought to ASK to quickly learn the marvelous truths of God. We need your financial support for ASK to grow "**in due season**" as you receive from us "**a word spoken in due season, how good is it!**" (Proverbs 15:23). People's lives have been changed, not with religious emotion, but with understanding of God's Word and of their place in God's plan. Slowly you will realize that you are the object of God's creation through Christ — and so is every other human being. God bless you for your help, small or large.

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³ Lambert Dolphin, ed., "[Preparations for a Third Jewish Temple](#)," compiled from various sources, it presents an interesting contemporary history.