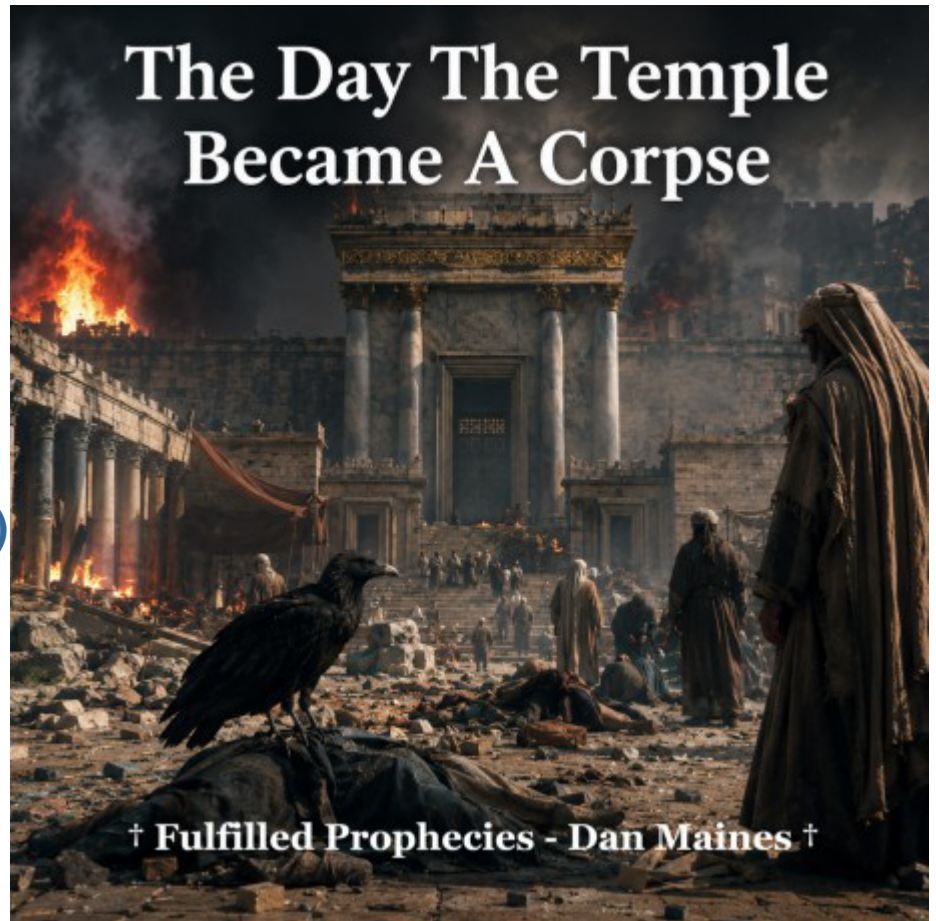


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The Day The Temple Became A Corpse (Part 2 of 5)



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† Most people read Matthew 24 and assume Jesus was predicting the end of the physical world.

† Yet Jesus spent Matthew 23 condemning Jerusalem, its leaders, and its temple before ever speaking the words recorded in Matthew 24.

† By the time Jesus left the temple, He had already declared it spiritually dead.

† The destruction that followed in AD 70 was not the death of the temple. It was the burial of something that had already become a corpse.

Matthew 23:27

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

† Jesus compared Israel's religious leadership to tombs filled with death.

† Outwardly they appeared righteous, but inwardly they were spiritually dead.

† The temple system still stood physically, but its leaders had rejected the Messiah.

† A body without life eventually becomes a corpse. Israel's leaders had already become spiritually lifeless. (Isaiah 1:21-23)

Matthew 23:38

Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!

† Jesus no longer called the temple His Father's house.

† He called it your house.

† God was departing from the temple just as His glory departed from the temple in Ezekiel's day. (Ezekiel 10:18-19)

† A house abandoned by God is a shell without life.

† The temple still stood, but it was already desolate in God's sight.

Luke 13:34-35

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who have been sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her young under her wings, and you were unwilling! Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you will not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'

† Jerusalem's greatest sin was rejecting the messengers God sent to her.

† The rejection of Christ completed that rebellion.

† Jesus announced that desolation was no longer future.

† Judgment was approaching because covenant privilege without covenant faithfulness always ends in judgment. (Matthew 21:43)

Matthew 24:28

Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

† Jesus did not suddenly change subjects.

† He was still speaking about the same doomed covenant city.

† The corpse represented the spiritually dead covenant system centered in Jerusalem.

† The eagles point to the Roman armies whose standards carried the eagle symbol.

† Rome gathered around the corpse exactly as Jesus foretold.

† What died spiritually in Matthew 23 was buried physically in AD 70. (Luke 21:20-22)

Revelation 11:8

And their dead bodies will lie on the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

† The great city is identified by the place where Christ was crucified.

† That city was Jerusalem.

† John described Jerusalem with the names Sodom and Egypt because of her spiritual condition.

† The city that once represented God's covenant people had become spiritually corrupt and dead.

† Revelation agrees completely with the warnings Jesus gave decades earlier.

† Jerusalem was a corpse long before her stones fell. (Isaiah 1:10)

Historical References

† Josephus described famine, violence, murder, and internal corruption within Jerusalem before its destruction.

† Josephus recorded that the city consumed itself from within before Rome completed its siege.

† Eusebius viewed Jerusalem's destruction as the fulfillment of Christ's warnings concerning the city and temple.

† Early Christians fled Jerusalem before its destruction, recognizing the signs Jesus had given.

How It Applies To Us Today

† God has never been impressed by outward religion without genuine faith.

† A beautiful structure means nothing if spiritual life is absent.

† Jesus condemned hypocrisy because God looks beyond appearances and sees the heart.

† We must never mistake religious activity for true fellowship with Christ.

† The temple that matters today is God's people, not a building made with hands. (1 Corinthians 3:16)

Q&A Appendix

Q: What was the corpse in Matthew 24:28?

A: The corpse represented the spiritually dead covenant system centered in Jerusalem that was approaching judgment.

(Matthew 23:38; Matthew 24:28)

Q: Why did Jesus call the temple desolate before AD 70?

A: Because God's judgment had already been pronounced upon it due to Israel's rejection of the Messiah. (Luke 13:34-35)

Q: Who were the eagles gathered around the corpse?

A: The Roman armies that surrounded Jerusalem and carried eagle standards. (Luke 21:20-22)

Q: Why does Revelation call Jerusalem Sodom and Egypt?

A: Because the city had become spiritually corrupt and opposed God's purposes despite its covenant history. (Revelation 11:8)

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Matthew 23:27; Matthew 23:38; Luke 13:34-35; Matthew 24:28; Revelation 11:8

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

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