

Session 6: Exile and return

The session started with another recap of the story so far:



One thing Steve mentioned briefly in the previous session (session 5) in the section about the temple was the temple miracles (one of my unplanned tangents). Details are found in various places but the most succinct in the Talmud is probably tractate Yoma 39b and also in Gemara.

At the day of atonement (remember towards the end of session 3 of this series, where the day of atonement was the pinnacle of Leviticus?) the priest drew lots for 2 goats – one to be sacrificed ‘to God as a sin offering’ and one ‘to Azazel’ which would be the scapegoat chased out of the camp into the desert to die. To ensure they were not mixed up, after the lot was cast the Azazel goat would have some red wool tied around its horns (RED – remember Rahab?). The lot was cast by the priest taking 2 stones from his ephod – and tractate Yoma 39b shows that for many years the ‘lot’ for the goat ‘for God’ would always be in the priest’s RIGHT hand.

The wool was taken from the goats horns before it was cast out and the wool was tied to the handles of the doors of the temple. It would turn white overnight, thus showing that the atonement had been successful.

Another miracle was that at the time of atonement, the westernmost light in the 7 stalked menorah in the temple (the one nearest the Holy of Holies) would burn even when it had no oil/fuel.

Temple miracles stopped

Talmud tractate Yoma 39b

תננו רבנו: ארבעים שנה קודם חורבן הבית לא היה גורל עולה בימיו, ולא היה לשון של זחורית מלבין, ולא היה גר מערבי דזולק

During the tenure of Shimon HaTzaddik, the lot for God always arose in the High Priest’s right hand; after his death, it occurred only occasionally; but during the **forty years prior to the destruction of the Second Temple**, the lot for God did not arise in the High Priest’s right hand at all. So too, the **strip of crimson wool** that was tied to the head of the goat that was sent to Azazel **did not turn white, and the westernmost lamp** of the candelabrum **did not burn** continually.

There were some other temple miracles too:

Temple miracles (2. the doors)
Talmud tractate Yoma 39b & the Gemara
the doors of the temple Sanctuary opened by themselves
the sound of the **doors of the Sanctuary** opening **was heard** from a distance of **eight Shabbat limits** (approx. 5 miles)

Temple miracles (3. the insense)
Talmud tractate Yoma 39b & the Gemara
goats that were in Jericho (approx. 15.5 miles) **would sneeze from smelling the fragrance of the incense** that burned in the Temple; the **women that were in Jericho did not need to perfume themselves**, since they were perfumed by the **fragrance of the incense**

And all these miracles stopped suddenly approximately '40 years before the temple was destroyed' (by the Romans)

Temple miracles stopped
40 years before the destruction of the temple
The Romans destroyed the Temple in AD 70
So, 40 years earlier is AD 30 Did anything significant happen then???

So At the time of Jesus crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and ascension The miracles stopped WHY? Because the temple had become redundant – Jesus had replaced the temple with his own body and his own sacrifice ...

Hebrews ch 10
¹ The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.
³ But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. ⁴ It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Hebrews ch 10
¹⁰ we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**. ¹¹ Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when **this** priest had offered for **all time** one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.
¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.

The tearing of the temple curtain separating the Holy of Holies is also relevant here. I have heard some 'teaching' that this is about us (ie people) gaining access to the Holy of Holies and therefore to God's presence (immanence) but does that make any sense? Why would we want access to a temple which Jesus has just made redundant?

OR The Holy of Holies was the place where symbolically God lived – it was symbolic of his presence in Israel and in the whole temple system of law / government etc And the curtain tore – it wasn't about us going IN It was about God going OUT !! AND ... remember God in darkness in session 1 of this series? – what else happened at the crucifixion?

SO The temple, the very centre of Jewish life, religion, law, government was declared redundant at the point of Jesus sacrifice of himself. For the 'what happened next' part, we'll have to do a series on Pentecost one day!!

Meanwhile What we were meant to be talking about:

The story continues

(N)	Exile into Assyria	721	BC
(S)	Exile into Babylon	587	BC

Return in 3 waves:

Zerubbabel	538-520	BC
Ezra	c 458	BC
Nehemiah	c 445	BC

We then looked at vid clips of 3 (or 4) books, for each clip asking:

1. Where did we see a glimpse of Jesus in that book
2. What is the relevance and message for OUR lives from that book?

Just a reminder we've seen plenty of glimpses of Jesus so far

Jesus throughout the Old Testament

Jesus throughout the Ancient Near East

In so many prophets and Psalms (here, below, Psalm 22)

Egyptian, Assyrian Babylonian gods walk on water as a sign of their divinity

Jeremiah: <https://youtu.be/RSK36cHbrk0>

Ezra-Nehemiah: <https://youtu.be/MkETkRv9tG8>

Daniel: <https://youtu.be/9cSC9uobtPM>

One final clip.

This one goes through the books of the OT – but exit after 4 minutes – he just waffles after that. A few of his points are a bit contrived, but most are really good:

<https://youtu.be/49mMc88dXi8>

