A gold crown on a white background

Description automatically generated**Session 10**

***Trustworthy, Video 6***

**Josiah**

**6-7 May 2024**

**The Ruins of the Temple –** Today’s video is set in Jerusalem, at the ruins of the temple Herod built. That temple was made from limestone, which absorbs water. So when the Roman army set fire to the city around 70 A.D., that water would have turned to steam, and the stones literally exploded! But the temple that King Josiah knew would have been the one that Solomon built. Josiah was one of the best earthly kings, because he devoted himself to bringing God’s Word to his people. But even he could not turn their *hearts* back to God. Jesus would later warn that “a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand”. Both the northern and southern kingdoms of the Israelites would go into captivity, their temple would be utterly destroyed—and it would be their exile that united them once again to long for one kingdom of their own. There’s no more “divided kingdom”; there is now an exiled community of Israelites desperately in need of a king to rescue them, a Messiah—Jesus. They had brought their troubles upon themselves, but God used even this to open their eyes to their need for a divine rescue and a divine Rescuer.

**History of the Temple –** Here is a brief history of the series of temples the nation of Israel would have known:

1. King David *collected the materials* for the very **first temple**; King Solomon *built* it (966-959 BC).
2. The Babylonians captured Jerusalem andthat temple was *destroyed* (587-586 BC).
3. King Cyrus of Persia *issued a decree* that another temple be constructed, and Zerubbabel *began that construction* (539-536 BC).
4. The foundation was laid in 520 BC, and the ***second* *temple*** *was finished* (516-515 BC).
5. Lysa was slightly mistaken when she said that she was standing by the ruins of the second temple in the video, because a **third temple complex** was *constructed by Herod the Great*, which incorporated the second temple and vastly expanded it. This is the temple that Jesus and His disciples would have known and that the Romans later destroyed (20 BC – 70 AD).

The temple that Herod built was never reconstructed. Why? One reason is that the city of Jerusalem was under foreign occupation since the destruction of that temple, up until the modern nation of Israel was formed. Another reason, from God’s perspective, is that there is no longer a need for a place for offering sacrifices since Christ, our ultimate Passover Lamb, shed His blood on our behalf. In fact, *our bodies* are now the temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)!

**The Ruins Are a Reminder –** As we look at the ruins of the temple today, we are reminded that they are the result of the era of the kings of Israel. The people wanted the kings…and this is how it ultimately ended: a destroyed temple, a divided kingdom, and a displaced people. But why was the temple needed in the first place? Remember that the temple was where relationship between God and His people took place. But our relationship with God was never intended to happen primarily in a physical building, with a need for a priest to mediate. God always wanted a direct and personal relationship with His people. This originated in the Garden of Eden, which was the original “temple”, if you will. There was no sin, and there was direct access to the presence of God. After the fall, God purposed to bring humanity back to that “temple garden”. The physical temple was never intended to be the final solution to experience true restoration of relationship. Through Christ the very Spirit of God now indwells the believer. Therefore, our very bodies have become a living temple.

**God IS Trustworthy! –** Throughout our study, we have seen that we can trust God, because we know the end of the story. The ruins that we see here on earth do not have the final say. If I really believe that, I will *live* differently. I will *think* differently. I can *stop trying to control* events, circumstances and people and fully trust God instead. The ruins of the Temple are directly across from the Mount of Olives. They are always facing the place where Jesus, *our* King, will return to reign. All things will be made new…and this gives us courage to face the broken down places in our own lives. May we quit trusting the wrong things and place our full trust in our trustworthy God. ***God IS trustworthy and true!***

**The “End of the Story” –** *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” 5And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said,* ***“Write this down, for******these words are trustworthy and true.”***  Revelation 21:1-5