

Chapter 6

Just Read the Graffiti

Introduction. *Seemed pointless.* I looked at the picture again. A massive solid rock shaped into a large rectangular, flat stone.¹ Was it a foundation for a future construction? The large rock was encircled by beautiful marble columns from floor to ceiling, with intricate design on the columns, all symmetrically arranged in an octagonal shape. What appeared to be Arabic script adorned the woodwork on the ceiling, almost like borders around the interior walls. Yet, the rock itself was rugged; seemed out of place in the midst of the grandeur of the structure that enclosed it. The most striking feature was the space – *empty space, above and all around the rock. Seemed pointless.*

The Dome of the Rock, Islam's shrine – I suppose one might liken it to a "sanctuary" of sorts, except, as we will see, its certainly not a mosque or similar place of worship. No, this bare Rock (hereafter, "Rock" will be capitalized when speaking of the interior Rock that is enclosed by the Dome) and its Dome covering are not about the worship of Allah. Its purposes are otherwise; *and, when we find them, we will have found a host of satan's fingerprints!*

We will first begin with ancient Jewish history on the Temple (the Dome of the Rock is located on the Temple Mount, the location where the Temple once stood) and move from there to more recent Muslim history (7th century AD). We will look at the purpose that Islam seeks to communicate through the design and location of the structure; and, finally, we will look at the Bible's prophecy of a coming blasphemy in the Last Days that has specific reference to the Temple of God.

Ancient Jewish History about the Temple. The story begins in ancient Biblical times. In Genesis 22:2, Abraham, patriarch of both Jewish and Muslim faiths, is commanded by God to bring his son, Isaac (Muslims believe Abraham brought Ishmael, not Isaac²), for sacrifice on an altar to God. Abraham obeys the command of God, but with knife raised high in the air to slay his son, God stops him. God acknowledges Abraham's act of obedience, as a lamb is mysteriously caught in the thicket. The lamb becomes Abraham's sacrifice in lieu of his son, Isaac (Genesis 22:13).

Many scholars believe the location of Abraham's intended sacrifice is Mount Moriah;³ and, Mount Moriah is the location upon which King Solomon eventually builds his magnificent temple in the tenth century BC.⁴ Solomon's Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586BC. A second Temple, smaller in size, is rebuilt seventy years later under the leadership of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2:1f). Finally, beginning in 20BC, Herod the Great restores the 2nd Temple to the grandeur of Solomon's original Temple. Herod's Temple was destroyed by the Romans under Titus in 70AD.⁵ It is this event that Jesus prophesied some thirty years before:

^{NAS} Luke 21:5 *And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said, ⁶ "As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down."*

When Solomon's Temple was rebuilt by Herod the Great beginning in 20BC, it was built on the Temple Mount (referred to as the "Noble Sanctuary" by Muslims) and consisted of several levels or courts, each rising above the other. The lowest court was the Court of the Gentiles. Gentiles (non-Jewish persons) were restricted to this lowest level. Next was the Sacred Enclosure, three feet higher than the Court of the Gentiles. The Court of the Women was the next court. It was three feet higher than the Sacred Enclosure; women were restricted to the Court of the Women. The Court of Israel followed, ten feet above the Court of the Women. Only men were allowed entry into the Court of Israel. The Court of the Priests was three feet above the Court of Israel; only priests were allowed entry into this Court. Finally, the House of God, eight feet above the Court of the Priests, divided into two compartments, the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.

Priests were selected by lot to enter the Holy Place on a daily basis where they performed offerings and prayers. The Holy of Holies included the age-old treasure of the Jewish people, the mystical, Ark of the Covenant, a rectangular shaped "box-like" structure that was covered with pure gold. The Ark contained three items as reminders of God's provision and care of the Jews during 40 years of wandering in the wilderness: the rod of Aaron which miraculously budded, a golden jar filled with the manna that fed the people during their wilderness wanderings, and the tablets containing the Ten Commandments (Hebrews 9:4). The cover over the Ark included two solid gold cherubim sculpted to face one another with outstretched wings pointing forward. The area between the cherubim over the top of the ark was referred to as the "mercy seat." The Spirit of God dwelt between the two cherubim (Exodus 25:22).

Entry to the Holy of Holies was forbidden except for one day a year, the Day of Atonement. Only the High Priest was allowed entrance on that day. The reason was clear. God was holy. No one was to approach His holiness without first complying with specific cleansing rituals. If any of those cleansing rituals were violated or omitted, death of the offending individual resulted (Exodus 28:35, 43; 30:20-21; Leviticus 10:7, 9; 22:9; Numbers 4:15, 19-20).

According to Leen Ritmeyer, former chief architect of the Temple Mount excavations and director of Ritmeyer Archaeological Design in England, the Rock within the Dome is the ancient foundation for the Ark of the Covenant which was located within the Holy of Holies of the 1st century, Jerusalem Temple.⁶ The *Mishnah*, the Jewish Book of Collections of Rabbinical teachings, refers to this solid rock structure as the "Foundation Stone."⁷ It is *the specific stone upon which the Ark of the Covenant was secured*, that location where God Himself dwelt.⁸ To Jews, it was the holiest of all locations because it was the literal dwelling place of God on earth.

Islam's History of the Dome of the Rock. The Dome of the Rock was built by Caliph Abd al-Malik in the Muslim year 72 (691-692AD)⁹ and is physically located on the Temple Mount (the Al-Aqsa Mosque is also built on the Mount) in Jerusalem. Except for 88 years during the 2nd Crusade, the Temple Mount has been under Muslim control.¹⁰

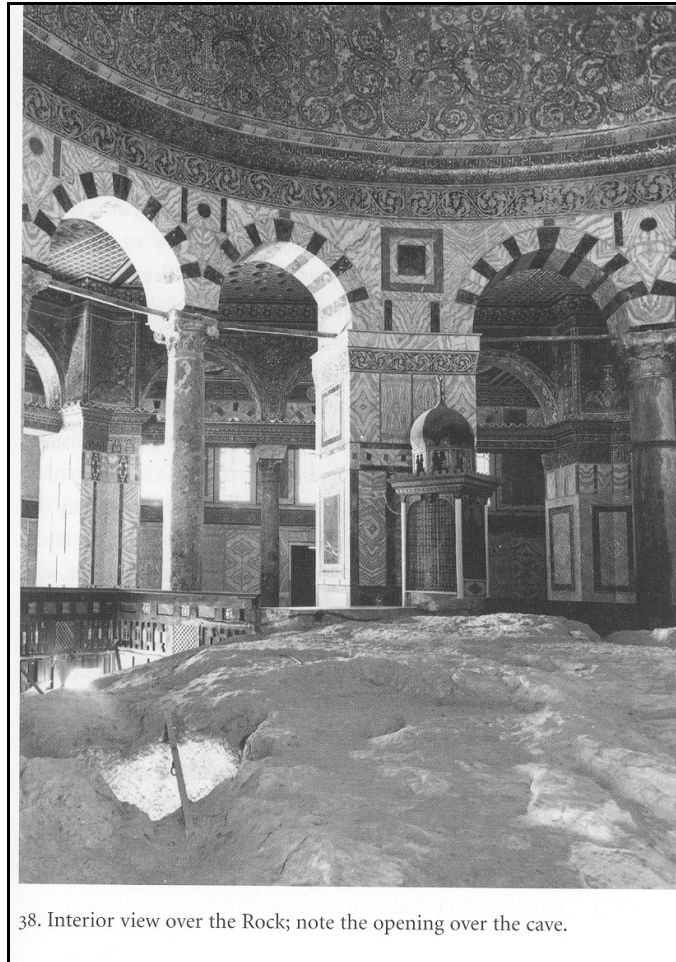
In the 20th century, the Temple Mount came under Jordanian rule (1948 - 1967), and Jews were forbidden from entering the area. After the Israeli forces gained control of the Old City in the 1967 Six Day War, non-

Muslim visits to the site resumed on occasion. Most Orthodox rabbis regard entry to the compound as a violation of Jewish law. This restriction is based on the belief that even though the Temple was destroyed centuries ago, the precise location of the Holy of Holies, the sanctuary for the literal presence of God, that was entered by the High Priest only once a year, is not known. Hence the restriction to Jews by their Rabbis is applied to the entire compound.¹¹ The Israeli government has granted management of the site today to a Muslim Council and access to the site is now strictly regulated by the Muslim Council but allowed at specific times during the year. Non-muslim prayers within the structure are strictly prohibited by the Muslim Council.¹²

The Rock, itself, is a relatively flat, solid rock area, measuring 56 feet by 42 feet.¹³ In addition, there is a crack in the Rock.¹⁴ As will be discussed shortly, Muslims believe the crack was caused when Muhammad “ascended to heaven.” The Rock wished to accompany him; but he would not allow it, so he held his hand behind him to keep the Rock from ascending with him - and *the Rock cracked*.¹⁵

According to renowned Dome of the Rock expert, Oleg Grabar, the Dome was not used by Muslims as a worship center for prayer or worship. Grabar notes that there is no designated direction for prayer and no space for worshipers to congregate. Even “circumambulation” (the process of encircling a central religious object multiple times (as is the case for the Kaaba in Mecca)) was problematic, as people would have been entering and exiting simultaneously at every door.¹⁶

Arabic inscriptions taken from the Qur’an cover the entire structure, both inside and outside.



38. Interior view over the Rock; note the opening over the cave.

The inscriptions on the inner octagonal walls are (don't skip this part; these inscriptions are critical!):

“In the name of Allah, the Merciful the Compassionate. There is no god but Allah. He is One. He has no associate. Unto Him belongeth sovereignty and unto Him belongeth praise. . . . Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger. Lo! Allah and His angels shower blessings on the Prophet. . . . The

blessing of Allah be on him and peace be on him, and may Allah have mercy. O People of the Book! Do not exaggerate in your religion nor utter aught concerning Allah save the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a Messenger of Allah, and His Word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers, and say not 'Three' - Cease! (it is) better for you! - Allah is only One God. Far be it removed from His transcendent majesty that He should have a son. . . . The Messiah will never scorn to be a servant unto Allah, nor will the favored angels. . . . Oh Allah, bless Your Messenger and Your servant Jesus son of Mary. Peace be on him the day he was born, and the day he dies, and the day he shall be raised alive! Such was Jesus, son of Mary, (this is) a statement of the truth concerning which they doubt. It befitteth not (the Majesty of) Allah that He should take unto Himself a son. Glory be to Him! When He decreeth a thing, He saith unto it only: Be! and it is. Lo! Allah is my Lord and your Lord. So serve Him. . . ."¹⁷

The Arabic script on the outer octagonal walls are more of the same.

Islam’s Account of Muhammad’s Night Journey and Ascension. It happened at night. Some say it was a vision, others an actual physical journey.¹⁸ Beginning in Mecca sometime before the *Hijra* (the beginning of the Islam faith on or about 9/17/622), Muslims believe that Muhammad was transported to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem by the Angel Gabriel on a “winged horse,” named “Buraq.”¹⁹ At the time of Muhammad’s Night Journey, the Temple lay in ruins having been destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.

A ladder was brought and Muhammad and Gabriel climbed through the first of seven heavens to the throne of God. At each of the seven stages, Muhammad was encouraged onward by one of the great prophets. Adam presided over the first stage or the first heaven. Jesus and John the Baptist, shared the second heaven; Joseph, the third; Enoch, the fourth; Aaron and Moses, the fifth and sixth; and finally, Abraham, the seventh heaven, the threshold of God’s abode.²⁰ Gabriel chose not to accompany Muhammad into the presence of God, so Muhammad goes it alone.²¹ When Muhammad reached the throne of God, God told him Muslims must pray 50 times a day as part of their religion; but on Muhammad’s way down, Moses convinced Muhammad to go back and petition God to reduce the number because religion is not to be a burden to man. Muhammad does this. Each time he returned down the ladder only to be convinced by Moses to return and petition God to further reduce the number of required prayers. Muhammad does this until he is able to convince God to reduce the number of required daily prayers to five (although the Qur’an specifies a requirement of three times a day, and the Hadith five times).²²

“The Dome . . . proudly asserted the supremacy of Islam in this holy city which had a large Christian majority. It announced that Islam had come to stay.”

This event in Muslim history is referred to as the Night Journey and the Ascension. It is celebrated annually by Muslims in the seventh lunar month of the Muslim calendar, the 27th day.²³

Seems like someone made a wrong turn to me. How does a Muslim shrine end up in Jerusalem? Islam’s birthplace is Medina on the Arabian Peninsula. Its holiest

city, Mecca, not far away. Yet, the Dome of the Rock is in Jerusalem, hundreds of miles to the West. Why

did Gabriel bother to take Muhammad to Jerusalem in the first place? Why not just Ascend from Mecca or Medina? Wouldn't that have accentuated the supremacy of Islam over all religions, Judaism, Christianity, as well as Zoroastrianism, the ancient religion of the Persians? What's more, why construct such a mammoth *empty* religious structure, *which serves no religious purpose in and of itself?*²⁴

Perhaps the best way to answer that question is to use the words of pro-Islam historian, Karen Armstrong:

*"In Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock was completed in 691, the first major Islamic monument, which proudly asserted the supremacy of Islam in this holy city which had a large Christian majority. It announced that Islam had come to stay."*²⁵

Blasphemy Against Jesus Christ. We have the history. Now lets apply the scripture to it. Does the Bible prophesy of a coming blasphemy against Jesus Christ by a "standing structure"? 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 states,

"Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. 5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? 6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way."

Notice verse 2:7, *"For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. . ."* The text is telling us that before the "man of lawlessness" appears in human form, he will be present in "spirit form." In spirit form, he will work his "mystery of lawlessness," i.e., his antichrist, antigod teachings, and his blasphemies against both. One of those blasphemies will be his "taking his seat" in the place reserved for God. *The Dome of the Rock just happens to be the chair of this deceiving antichrist spirit!*

In fact, the Dome of the Rock is not so much about Muhammad as it is about Islam's declaration of who *Jesus Christ is not*. Return with me to the Qur'an's verses on the inner walls of the Dome (my underscore):

“ . . . There is no god but Allah. He is One. He has no associate.
“ . . . The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a Messenger of Allah,
“ . . . say not 'Three' - Cease! (it is) better for you!
“ . . . Allah is only One God.
“ . . . Far be it removed from His transcendent majesty that He should have a son.
“ . . . The Messiah will never scorn to be a servant unto Allah,
“ . . . Oh Allah, bless . . . your servant Jesus son of Mary.
“ . . . Such was Jesus, son of Mary, (this is) a statement of the truth concerning which they doubt.

“ . . . *It befitteth not (the Majesty of) Allah that He should take unto Himself a son.*
“ . . . *Glory be to Him! When He decreeth a thing, He saith unto it only: Be! and it is.*

The real purpose of the of the Dome of the Rock? It is to sit in that place where God once sat and declare to the world who Jesus Christ is not. *Just read the graffiti.* Its all over the walls!

Muhammad’s Ascent as a Blasphemy of Jesus Christ. If you ever wanted an example of one-upsmanship, you have it in Muhammad’s so-called Ascent to heaven. Seven stages of heaven ascending from the Foundation Stone to the throne of God in heaven. Jesus is on number two stage shared with John the Baptist (notice – Jesus *shares* stage 2 with the Baptist!). Muhammad? He not only clears the second stage but keeps right on moving through stage seven. In fact, his heavenly companion, the Angel

“The Dome stands as a blasphemy against Jesus Christ. Satan’s fingerprints are all over the walls. Just read the Qur’anic verse right from its walls.

Gabriel, opts out as Muhammad continues alone into the throne room of heaven for his divine appointment with God. Muhammad and God have a little “fireside chat”! So secure is Muhammad in his rendezvous with God that he follows Moses’ counsel to return time and time again to secure a reduction in the number of daily prayers for Muslims from fifty (Allah’s first instruction) to five. (I can’t help but wonder how many back-and-forth trips that required? Nine trips per my count; can you imagine? Who was the most frustrated on that last exchange? Allah

or Moses?)

The prophecy of 2 Thessalonians 2:4 is fulfilled in the event the Dome of the Rock commemorates. Islam exalts Muhammad above Christ in Muhammad’s Ascension. Christ, who is only able to make it to the second stage, is left behind as only Muhammad is worthy to journey all the way to the throne room of God.

This fact is similarly reflected in the Qur’an’s designation of Muhammad as the “seal of the prophets” (Qur’an 33:40) who, alone, is the last and greatest of the prophets. He “seals” prophecy for all humanity according to Muslims. Christ, although considered a prophet by Islam, came before Muhammad. Thus, he is a “second stage prophet” whose message was corrupted by Christians.

Blasphemy Against Christianity. I recently heard of a church that was considering selling its property to a local municipality. If successful in acquiring the property, the municipality was going to transform the church into the city jail. Something didn’t seem right about that. God’s house is a place where people are set free; the city wanted to make it a place where people are imprisoned.

In the Old Testament book of Judges, Gideon, an Israelite, is told by God to tear down the altar to Baal, a foreign deity, that had been built by the people of Israel as an alternate deity to God. Then, Gideon is told to do the following:

^{NAS} Judges 6:26 *“and build an altar to the LORD your God on the top of this stronghold in an orderly manner, and take a second bull and offer a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah which you shall*

cut down."

Why was Gideon told to build an altar on top of the torn down altar to Baal? Why was he instructed to use the wood from Baal's altar to build the altar to God? *Because God wanted everyone to know who was the one, true God.*

Did you ever play "king of the mountain" when you were a child? I did. We made our way to the highest "hill." Then fought to take everyone else down. The last one standing was "king of the mountain."

The Dome of the Rock is Islam's tangible reminder to the world that it is still "king of the mountain."

Blasphemy Against God and those Who Dwell in Heaven. Revelation 13:6 states,

"And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven."

When Islam claims that Muhammad sat with God in heaven, their claim is to place Muhammad at a location *reserved for those to whom it has been granted* – the followers of Jesus Christ who receive eternal life through the blood of the lamb (Revelation 12:11). Islam's claim to what does not belong to it is a slander against those to whom it does belong – *it is a slander to those who dwell in heaven.*

The Bible says that no one can see God and live. The Bible records Moses' request (of God) that he might see God. God's response to Moses is as follows:

^{NAS} Exodus 33:19 *And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you;"*²⁰ *But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!"*

The prophet Isaiah has a vision of the heavenly throne room. He sees God, *but only in His vision.* His response is as follows:

^{NAS} Isaiah 6:5 *"Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."*⁶ *Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a burning coal in his hand which he had taken from the altar with tongs.*⁷ *And he touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven."*

How is it possible that Moses is warned that to see the face of God is to die, and yet Muhammad visits God and lives to tell about it? How is it possible that the prophet Isaiah, who sees God in a vision, and is rendered "unclean" and "ruined" because of God's holiness, yet Muhammad is able to stand in God's presence no less than 9x, and petition God each time to change His mind for Muhammad's better plan for Muslim prayer?

Because Islam's point is to exalt Muhammad to the point that he is equal to or greater than the One, True, God. Notice 2 Thess 2:4 once more: ". . . *who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God*" (2 Thess 2:4).

Muhammad's visit with the Divine is a blasphemy against God and his holiness. The Bible says that no one can see God and live; no one can stand in the presence of this holy God and live. If Islam professes Muhammad has done this, it has blasphemed God.

The Abomination of Desolation and Christianity's Pact of Silence. Matthew 24:15 states,

"Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains;¹⁷ let Him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house;"

Jesus is speaking these words as he and his disciples are walking on the Temple Mount, admiring the beauty of the Temple. Jesus remarks that the day is coming when the Temple will be completely destroyed. In fact, destruction will be so complete that the Temple will be dismantled stone by stone (Matthew 24:2).²⁶ The disciples are incredulous at Jesus' statement. They ask Him when these things shall take place (24:3), to which Jesus foretells of perilous times that are coming.

The key phrase is verse 15, "*when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place. . .*"²⁷ The Dome of the Rock is a structure that "*stands in the holy place.*" The text is referring to a building or other type structure. Why else use the phrase "*standing in the Holy Place.*" Another New Testament reinforces this interpretation:

Mark 13:14 *"But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."*

The Dome of the Rock "stands" on the Temple Mount, in that place which formerly located the Temple and its Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies was the place where the Spirit of God hovered above the Ark of the Covenant. The Spirit of God physically dwelt among His people in this place. The Dome of the Rock now stands in that place where the Temple and the Holy of Holies were located. The Dome doesn't belong there because the place is God's.

Notice the parenthetical comment in verse 15, "*let the people understand.*" To the audience of the 1st century text, it is as if Jesus had just winked at them. They were quite aware that the event Jesus is referring to had already taken place in the second century BC (167 BC), almost 200 years before Jesus' remark. The Greek military leader, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the King of Syria (whom Daniel 8:9 refers to as the "rather small horn" and Daniel 11:31 refers to the abomination desolation), attacked and plundered Jerusalem, including the erection of an altar to Zeus in the Temple followed by the sacrifice of a pig on the altar (swine are considered "unclean" in the Jewish faith). Thereafter, Antiochus prohibited the sacrifices of any animals in the Temple for a period of approximately three and a half years.²⁸ Antiochus' purpose was

to replace Judaism with Hellenism, the Greek religion. Emil Schurer describes Antiochus' act as follows:

“The observance of all Jewish ordinances, in particular those relating to the Sabbath and circumcision, was prohibited on pain of death. In every town in Judaea sacrifice was to be offered to the heathen gods. Overseers were sent everywhere to see that the royal command was carried out. Where the people did not comply willingly, they were obliged to do so by force. Once a month a check was made, and whoever was found with a scroll of the Torah or had had a child circumcised, was put to death. On 15 . . . December 167 B.C., a heathen altar was built in Jerusalem on the great altar of burnt-offering, and on 25 (December) the first heathen sacrifice was offered on it (1 Mac. 1:54, 59); this is ‘the abomination of desolation’, . . . to which the Book of Daniel refers (Dan. 11:31, 12:11). The sacrifice, according to 2 Maccabees, was offered to Olympian Zeus, to whom the Temple in Jerusalem had been dedicated.”²⁹

What Jesus is saying to the disciples (in the 1st century AD) is that an event *likened* to the abomination of desolation which occurred at the hand of Antiochus (in 167BC) will take place again in a future time period. When it does, the people of Jerusalem, should flee to the mountains for their lives. Bible scholar, Donald Hagner, in his Word Commentary on Matthews states,

“The profanation of the temple . . . took place in 168 B.C. accomplished by Antiochus Epiphanes as a part of his attempt to wipe out Judaism . . . Jesus adopts the same language to indicate that a similar desecration of the temple will occur. Matthew points specifically to the source of the expression in his added words . . ., “which was spoken of by the prophet Daniel” . . . The Danielic imagery was familiar to the readers. Now they were to know that what Daniel once referred to, fulfilled in the historical events of 167 B.C., was prophesied to occur again by Jesus. This is thus privileged information about the future.”³⁰

This event did take place. *On two separate, future, occasions.* We mentioned the first event in our prior chapter: it was in 135AD when Roman Emperor Hadrian built “his city” amidst the ruins of Jerusalem and changed the name of Jerusalem to “Aelia Capitolina”; and, his erection of a temple to Zeus on the ruins of the Temple Mount.³¹ *Jews considered it an “abomination” for alien sanctuaries to be built in their city.*³² As we discussed in our prior chapter, the significance of Hadrian’s acts was an attempt to do away with Judaism as a religion. Jews would rather die than for this to occur. The second Jewish-Roman war was the only response of the Jewish faithful.

The second future event occurred in the 6th century AD. Jerusalem surrendered to the Muslims in 638AD, under the caliphate of Umar, the second caliph of Islam.³³ The Dome of the Rock was built in 691AD by Caliph Abd al-Malik in celebration of Islam’s triumph over Christianity and Judaism. The “abomination of desolation” that had occurred at the hand of Antiochus Epiphanes was an attempt to wipe out Judaism and to replace it with the religion of Antiochus, and his pantheon of deities, led by Zeus. The “abomination of desolation” that had occurred at the hand of Emperor Hadrian was an attempt to wipe out Judaism, including elimination of the practice of circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, and the study of the Torah. The last abomination occurred at the hands of Islam. As we will see next, the “Pact of Umar” required the ceasing of all evangelism by Christians as well as any outward demonstration of the Christian faith. Thus, it sought to accomplish precisely what Antiochus failed to accomplish in 167BC, and Hadrian

sought to accomplish in 135AD. The Dome of the Rock is simply the tangible, visible evidence that *stands in the holy place* symbolizing the desolation of the land from both Judaism and Christianity.

Islam's Treaties With Conquered Peoples. Conquered peoples were required to enter into a Pact or Agreement that required their evangelical silence, submission, and humiliation before all Muslims. This Pact is known historically as the "Pact (or "Covenant") of Umar"³⁴ (Umar was the second caliph of Islam. Historians differ as to whether or not Umar was the actual author of the Pact even though it bears his name³⁵). This Pact became the "model" for future "treaties" throughout Islam's history.³⁶ Those who entered the Pact were referred to as "*dhimmis*."³⁷

Here are a *few highlights* of the Pact of Umar (the "we" in the contract refers to the conquered peoples, i.e., non-Muslims who are petitioning their Muslim lords through the treaty):

1. we will not erect in our city or the suburbs any new monastery, church, cell or hermitage;
2. we will not repair any of our church buildings that may fall into ruins;
3. we will not make a show of the Christian religion nor invite any one to embrace it;
4. we will not prevent any of our kinsmen from embracing Islam, if they so desire.
5. we will honor the Muslims and rise up in our assemblies when they wish to take our seats;
6. we will shave the front of our heads (to be distinguished as dhimmis);
7. we will not display the cross upon our churches;
8. we will strike the clappers in our churches lightly;
9. we will not recite our services in a loud voice;
10. we will not carry Palm branches [on Palm Sunday] or our images in procession in the streets;
11. at the burial of our dead we will not chant loudly or carry lighted candles,³⁸

Examples of broadened restrictions in later centuries include:

1. If a "dhimmi" (a non-Muslim) raised a hand against a Muslim, even if in self-defense, he was sentenced to death.³⁹
2. The dhimmis, . . . , were required to endure public humiliation by Muslims. Dhimmis were not allowed to own houses that were larger in appearance than their Muslim neighbors. Dhimmis were not allowed to ride a horse or camel, only a donkey. When passing Muslims, they were required to dismount "for a Christian must only appear before a Muslim in a humiliating position" (this restriction existed into the 20th century in Yemen where until 1948 it was specified that a Christian had to sit sidesaddle when riding a donkey).⁴⁰
3. Dhimmis had to walk with their eyes lowered and pass to the left of the Muslims, who were encouraged to push them aside. When standing before a Muslim, a dhimmi was required to speak in a lowered voice and only when authorized to do so.⁴¹
4. Many laws existed regulating the clothing that dhimmis could wear (color, shape, and dimensions). According to Sunni Muslim author Abu Zakaria Mohiuddin Yahya Ibn Sharaf al-Nawawi, 13th century,⁴² the dhimmi,

*“ . . . has to make himself distinguishable by a piece of yellow cloth and a belt over his clothing. If he enters a bath house where there are Muslims, or if he undresses elsewhere in their presence, the infidel has to wear an iron or lead ring on his neck or else some other sign of servitude.”*⁴³

Until 1875, the Jews of Tunisia could only wear a blue or black burnous (shawl or head covering). A 20th century description by a woman of Yemen provides that the men had to wear a white cotton shirt with stripes of black.⁴⁴

5. Under the Ottoman sultan Orkhan (1326 - 1359AD), the *devshirme* was instituted. This practice consisted of a levy or tax equal to one-fifth of the Christian children from the conquered Balkan regions.⁴⁵ Author Bat Ye'or states:

*“These youngsters, aged between fourteen and twenty, were converted to Islam and entered the corps of janissaries, military militias formed almost exclusively of Christians. . . . At a fixed date, every father had to gather with his sons at the central place of the village. The recruiting agents, themselves janissaries, then selected the handsome and most robust youth in the presence of the qadi (ruling judge of Islamic law). . . . These levies gave rise to further abuses, the recruiters taking a surplus of children in order to sell them back to their parents. . . . Removed from their families, hardened by painful experiences, and turned into fanatics by their education, these soldiers became the cruelest weapon against their own people.”*⁴⁶

6. The dhimmi was required to pay two taxes, the *kharaj* and the *jizya*. The *kharaj* represented the *“Islamic community’s rights of ownership over the conquered lands of non-Muslim peoples. . . .”*⁴⁷ The *jizya* represented a poll tax which was assessed at three rates in accordance with the economic condition of each individual male above puberty.⁴⁸ Not only was payment of the tax required by all males, but the payment process required an act of humiliation be endured by the payee. Bat Ye'or describes the humiliation process:

*“ . . . this poll tax was to be paid by each person individually at a humiliating public ceremony in which the dhimmi, while paying it, was struck either on the head or the nape of the neck. . . .”*⁴⁹

One final point about the “treaty.” It could be broken or changed at any time, but only by the Muslims. Consider this quote attributed to Caliph Umar in 640AD:

*“The land belongs to Allah and his Messenger, the Messenger of Allah can annul his pact if he so wishes.”*⁵⁰

The Desolation of Silence. When Antiochus IV Epiphanes prohibited the worship of God in the Temple in 167BC by the sacrifice of a pig on the altar of God, the Temple was effectively rendered unclean and the people bereft of the benefits of their God. A “desolation” occurred because Antiochus prohibited Jews from practicing their faith. His act caused a “desolation,” i.e., the people were made “desolate” of their God because they could not worship Him or practice their faith. Similarly, with Emperor Hadrian in 135AD who prohibited the practice of Judaism by the Jewish people; both events were “desolations.”

Enter Islam, 7th century AD, and the Dome of the Rock witnessing to Islam's supremacy. Now, the population of Jerusalem is predominantly Christian. The city is filled with Christian worship centers having gone through several periods of building since the time of Constantine. Eric Cline in his work *Jerusalem Besieged*, describes several building programs, including the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Church of St Sion (referred to as the "Mother of All Churches"), and the New Church of St Mary.⁵¹ Cline gives the following description of Jerusalem, pre Islam:

"The part of the western hill known as Mount Zion was rebuilt, and the population of the city grew to about sixty thousand. Jerusalem's population would not be so large again until the twentieth century. Among Justinian's most important additions to the city was the New Church of St. Mary. . . Thus Jerusalem once again became a religious center, this time for Christian pilgrims rather than Jews. The Christians, like the Jews before them, believed that they alone possessed knowledge of God's final revelations. Another prophet (Mohammed) and another religion (Islam) would soon challenge them in this belief."⁵²

Jerusalem and the Christians who lived there were rendered "desolate" from their God when they gave away their right to give testimony to their Savior. Unlike the Jews of the time of Antiochus IV, Titus, and Hadrian, who revolted at the loss of life, Christians agreed to Islam's terms of the dhimma contract. In so doing, they rendered the land that Christ had walked as all but absent of the presence of the Holy Spirit; and Christianity, future, as all but gutted of its adherents. Consider this scripture:

^{NAS} Revelation 12:11 *"And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.*

To overcome the dragon required ". . .the blood of the Lamb and . . . the word of their testimony. . ." When Christians capitulated to Islam, when they agreed to the Pact of Umar, they agreed to a Pact of *silence*. The significance of silence can only be understood when one remembers how Christianity spread from the land of Palestine where Jesus walked. It was spread by converts telling others about Jesus Christ. That is, their "testimony," their "story" about what Jesus Christ had done in "saving them" from the penalty of their sins. When Christians agreed to the Pact of Umar, they gave away "the word of their testimony." They sealed the fate of Christendom for the land of Palestine; no longer would it be spread by personal testimony of the work of Christ. In one generation, two at the most, the land was rendered desolate from Christ. *The prophecy of Matthew 24:15 had been fulfilled.*

Perhaps this quote by Sir William Muir in his work written at the turn of the 19th century best sums up this desolation symbolized by the standing Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount:

"The abomination of desolation stood in the Holy place. The cradle of Christianity, Zion, the joy of the whole earth, was trodden under foot, and utterly cut off from the sight of its votaries. And all is told by Byzantine writers in a few short lines. The pen of the Christian annalist might well refuse to write the story of cowardice and shame."⁵³

The Dome of the Rock symbolizes the abomination of desolation that still stands in the Holy Place of Palestine. No longer of Christian majority, the land that Jesus once walked was rendered by Islam all but

desolate of the Savior who gave His life that others might live.

Seem pointless anymore? *A Dome covering empty space; just an exposed Rock? Not quite.*

Blasphemy. Against God, against Jesus Christ, against the Temple, and against Christianity as a religion.

Just read the graffiti.

Summary of Key Points in this Chapter	
Point 1	The Dome of the Rock stands as a blasphemy against Jesus Christ. The Arabic script that adorns its interior and exterior walls is more about who Jesus Christ is not, than it is about who Muhammad is. Over and over again, the Qur'anic verse declares Jesus not to be the Son of God, but only a prophet born to the virgin, Mary, by command of God; likewise, it denies the trinity.
Point 2	The Dome of the Rock stands as a blasphemy against God and those who dwell in heaven. In Muhammad's Night Journey (the event the structure is said to commemorate), Muhammad has an "audience" with God. Yet, the Bible declares God to be so holy that no one can see Him and live. Muhammad not only sees God, but has 9 visits with God until he successfully gets God to reduce the required number of daily prayers for Muslims from 50 to 5.
Point 3	The Dome of the Rock "stands" in the holy place, the Temple Mount, which formerly located the Temple and the Holy of Holies. The Dome of the Rock does not belong there; only God belongs there; further, God is blasphemed by the location of the Dome of the Rock over the Foundation Stone, that Stone thought to have located the Ark of the Covenant, the literal presence of God.
Point 4	The Dome of the Rock is the abomination of desolation prophesied in Matthew 24:15. It symbolizes Christianity having given away its testimony by agreeing to the required silence of dhimmis, conquered peoples of Islam. The land that Christ once walked which, in the 7 th century AD, was filled with Christians, was rendered all but desolate from the Savior who died on its Hill. In one generation, perhaps two, Christianity was replaced with Islam for most of the Middle East.

Chapter 5 Endnotes.

1Randall Price, *The Stones Cry Out*, p. 216.

2Cyril Glasse', *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, p 193. Glasse' explains that the Qur'an does not specify the name of the child Abraham was about to sacrifice on the altar. It only states that Abraham's obedience was rewarded; a second son, Isaac, was the reward.

3Gordon J. Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 2: Genesis 16-50*, Electronic Version, Logos Library System, Version 2.1e.

4Available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moriah> at May 17, 2007.

5Available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herod's_Temple at May 17, 2007.

6Randall Price, p 211-212

7Randall Price, p 211-212, citing the Herbert Danby translation of *The Mishnah*, Yoma 5.2, p. 167, Oxford University Press, 1989.

8Randall Price, p. 215.

9Grabar, p 59.

10Thomas F. Madden, *A Concise History of the Crusades*, p. 213.

11Available at, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dome_of_the_Rock, at February 27, 2008.

12Available at, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dome_of_the_Rock at January 21, 2008.

13Glasse', p 102.

14Some authorities speak of a "cavern" located in the interior of the Rock as opposed to a "crack." See Grabar, p. 134.

15Glasse', p 102.

16Grabar, p 74.

17Website, "Islamic Awareness.," www.islamic-awareness.org/History/Islam/Inscriptions/DoTR.html, linked at 10/6/06. See also, Grabar, pp. 94 - 95.

18Available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isra_and_Miraj at May 17, 2007.

19Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad, A Biography of the Prophet*, p. 138.

20Armstrong, p. 139.

21Armstrong, p. 140.

22Glasse' p 301 and Armstrong, pp 138-139.

23Armstrong, p. 139.

Chapter 5 Endnotes.

24 Oleg Grabar gives the following explanation of the reason for the Dome's existence: "Several hypotheses attempt to explain what the Dome of the Rock was meant to be at the time of its creation, but only in the eleventh century was an association firmly established between the building and its most consistent popularly accepted purpose: the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's mystical Night Journey to Jerusalem, followed by his Ascension through the heavens to contemplate the divine universe. Grabar, p. 7.

25 Karen Armstrong. *Islam, A Short History*, p. 44.

26 History records Jesus' prophecy to be correct. The Roman's destruction of the Temple in AD 70 was a literal dismantling of the entire structure, stone by stone. The Western Wall is all that remains of the original structure. It is referred to as the Wailing Wall as Jews continue to mourn the destruction of the Temple almost 2000 years ago. Available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Wall#Eyewitness_accounts_of_Roman_actions, at May 22, 2007.

27 Antiochus' abomination of desolation is prophesied of by the prophet Daniel: ^{NAS} Daniel 8:9 "And out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land. . . .¹¹ It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down. . . ." Daniel 11:31 "And forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation."

28 Stephen Miller describes Antiochus' plunder as follows: "Antiochus' persecution of the Jews may be considered to have begun in 170 BC with the assassination of the high priest, Onias III and terminated in 163 BC with his death. . . . During this period, he executed thousands of Jews who resisted his unfair regulations. . . . he plundered the temple in Jerusalem (taking its treasures, including the furniture. . .) and committed deeds of murder (cf 1 Macc 1.20-24; 2 Macc 5:1ff). . . . Many other ways in which Antiochus "trampled" upon the Jewish religion by erecting an altar to Zeus in the Temple precincts and offering swine on it (cf 1 Macc 1:37-39, 44 - 47, 54, 59; 2 Macc 6:2-5). . . . In 167BC, Antiochus issued the order that the regular ceremonial observances to Yahweh were forbidden, and thus sacrifices ceased being offered (cf 1 Macc 1.20-23; 47, 54; 2 Macc 6:2-5) . . . for a period of approximately three years. See Stephen Millar, p 226, 227.

29 Emil Schurer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, Vol 1*, p. 155.

30 Donald A. Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 33b: Matthew 14-28*, (Dallas, Texas: Word Books, Publisher) 1998.

31 Schurer, Vol 1, p. 537.

32 Schurer, *ibid.*

33 Sir William Muir, *The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall from Original Sources*, p. 142f.

34 Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 48.

35 *Ibid.*

36 Sir William Muir, p. 146 - 147.

37 Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 47.

38 Available at <http://www.bu.edu/mzank/Jerusalem/tx/pactofumar.htm> at May 21, 2007, citing Jacob Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source book*, 315-1791, (New York: JPS, 1938), 13-15.

39 Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 57.

Chapter 5 Endnotes.

40Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 63.

41Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 64.

42Available at, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nawawi> at January 21, 2008.

43Bat Ye'or, *Islam and Dhimmitude - Where Civilizations Collide*, p. 91.

44Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 67.

45Bat Ye'or, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity Under Islam - From Jihad to Dhimmitude*, p. 114.

46Bat Ye'or, Bat Ye'or, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity Under Islam - From Jihad to Dhimmitude*, p. 114.

47Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 52.

48Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 53.

49Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 53.

50Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi*, p. 47.

51Eric Cline, *Jerusalem Besieged*, p. 139.

52Eric Cline, p. 139.

53Sir William Muir, *The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline and Fall from Original Sources*, p. 148.