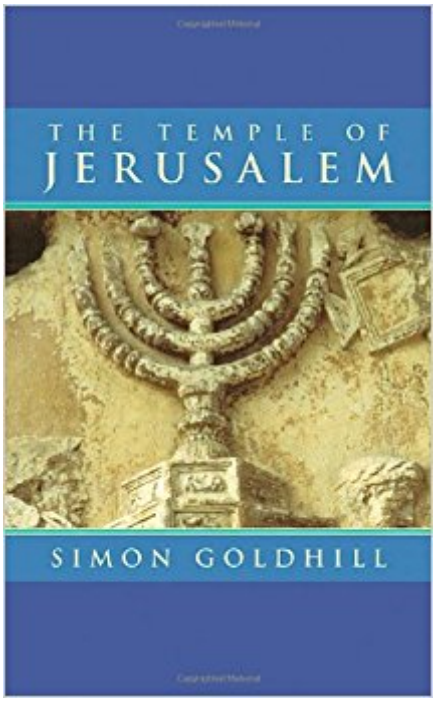
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The Temple Of Jerusalem (Wonders Of The World)



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Synopsis

Read the Bldg Blog interview with Mary Beard about the Wonders of the World series (Part I and Part II) It was destroyed nearly 2000 years ago, and yet the Temple of Jerusalem--cultural memory, symbol, and site--remains one of the most powerful, and most contested, buildings in the world. This glorious structure, imagined and re-imagined, reconsidered and reinterpreted again and again over two millennia, emerges in all its historical, cultural, and religious significance in Simon Goldhill's account. Built by Herod on a scale that is still staggering--on an earth and rock platform 144,000 square meters in area and 32 meters high--and destroyed by the Roman emperor Titus 90 years later, in 70 A.D., the Temple has become the world's most potent symbol of the human search for a lost ideal, an image of greatness. Goldhill travels across cultural and temporal boundaries to convey the full extent of the Temple's impact on religious, artistic, and scholarly imaginations. Through biblical stories and ancient texts, rabbinical writings, archaeological records, and modern accounts, he traces the Temple's shifting significance for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. A complex and engaging history of a singular locus of the imagination--a site of longing for the Jews; a central metaphor of Christian thought; an icon for Muslims: the Dome of the Rock--The Temple of Jerusalem also offers unique insight into where Judaism, Christianity, and Islam differ in interpreting their shared inheritance. It is a story that, from the Crusades onward, has helped form the modern political world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Though only one retaining wall (the famous "Wailing Wall") survives, the Temple of Jerusalem remains a meaningful symbol in many religious traditions and is a source of inspiration for artists, poets, archaeologists and others who have been captivated by the idea of the once glorious structure. Goldhill, a professor of Greek Literature and Culture at the University of Cambridge, discusses the significance of the Temple to Christians, Muslims, Jews and even Freemasons, who "take their 'passwords' and allegorical meanings from the Temple" for their levels of initiation. He explains that the Temple, built to replace the first one that was destroyed in 587 BC and a second one that was deemed insufficient by Herod the Great, is commonly regarded as the second Temple because the construction of a third would represent the End of Days for Jews and Christians. Though the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD, it still inspired many artistic imaginings that Goldhill acknowledges are a valid part of its "archaeology." These renderings are based on descriptions of the grand appearance of the Temple in scripture, which Goldhill describes at length, along with the many sacred rituals that took place inside. This fourth installment in Harvard's Wonders of the World series (The Parthenon, The Alhambra, etc.) illustrates the temple in fantastic detail and conveys its significance and symbolism both when it was standing and after its destruction. The thorough discussions of a wide variety of interpretations comprise a fascinating and vivid treatment of what Goldhill demonstrates to be "the most potent symbol of the human search for a lost ideal...that has prompted struggle, brutal war between cultures and nations, and some of the most moving poetry and art of the Western tradition." 25 halftones, 9 line drawings. Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Built by Herod the Great, king of Judea, the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman emperor Titus 90 years later, in 70 C.E. Goldhill, a professor of Greek literature and culture at the University of Cambridge, presents his book as a "tour of the bizarre and wonderful history of an imagined building: it will take us from sex and politics in the Bible to the violence and romance of the Knights of the Crusades." As a political and religious center, Goldhill says, "it inevitably became the focus of war and social struggle, but as a destroyed building, the space of its absence has attracted the hopes and aspirations of millions of people over the centuries." With 25 halftones and nine line drawings, this book captures in extraordinary detail the remarkable history of this religious monument. George CohenCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved

I love it!

This is a fascinating history of this most sacred building. It sets the social context as well as the day-to-day workings of Temple worship. Extremely well-written!

Great book to own.

Love it!!!!

like new

This little book describes not just the historic Temple(s), but also how Christians and Muslims have perceived the Temple.By and large, I already was aware of much of what this book says about the Temples. However, Goldhill does alter the common chronology slightly- while most commentators speak of the First Temple and the Second Temple, Goldhill suggests that Herod’s renovations to the Temple [which include the Western Wall] were so extensive as to create a sort of Third Temple.Goldhill’s discussion of Christian and Islamic perspectives was more interesting. For example, Goldhill discusses Paul’s use of the phrase that "your body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit

The writing is clever, with the right zest of irony. The book is sparkling, with the right cocktail of erudition, trivia bits, political analysis and text criticism. My intention was to browse this short volume just to find the dates and facts I needed, but I found myself reading it almost cover to cover (chapter 10, "Archeology and Imperialism", was too English-centered for my taste, and the last chapter, "The Temple is ours!", failed to teach me something new).The main contribution of the book, in my view, is to put the historical facts in a much broader perspective -- the influence of the destruction of the Jewish Temple on modern political discourse, for example, is disserted in a truly fascinating chapter.Goldhill (great name, since the Temple was located on Jerusalem’s most sacred hill!) excels in clarifying the biblical text and in explaining the motivations behind it. The Koran gets the same analytical treatment. The book includes lots of illustrations (black and white, alas), some I’ve never seen before. If you’re looking for an intelligent commentary on the Temple of Jerusalem thru history, don’t look any further.

There is plenty of information about the Temple of Jerusalem in this short book. We see a plan of the Temple Mount in the time of the Herodian Temple, as well as a plan of Herod’s Temple itself. And we see a plan of the earlier Solomon’s Temple.The significance of the Temple is shown

through the ages. We see it the Temple on a Bar Kochba shekel (from the second century AD), with a lulav and and etrog on the other side of the coin.Then we jump to the Christians. We read a comment from Saint Jerome about Jewish pilgrims to the Western Wall, "they are not worthy of pity." By the way, disparaging comments such as this one were so typical of Christian saints that it may make the word "saint" more of an insult than a compliment. In any case, Goldhill explains how the Christians went from an initial conclusion that "there was a need for no building" on the site of the Temple Mount to a later conclusion that a big beautiful building would be a good idea after all.The author does not forget about the Muslims (my ancestors!) and their connection to the Temple Mount. And he does discuss the Dome of the Rock. I found that especially interesting, given that I've been to the Dome of the Rock and even touched the Rock.What's missing from all this?Well, first, I think we're missing a couple of perspectives about the Temple Mount. The Dome of the Rock is a pretty structure, but it has political significance. Its words are a direct insult to Christians. Its location is a direct insult to Jews. These insults are central in nature: the fact that some Jews and Christians do not feel insulted by it does not change the challenge to Christian doctrine nor the fact that Judaism is a Temple-based religion without a Temple.The fact that the majority of Jews do not wish to rebuild their Temple does not change the fact that some Jews do wish to do so. And I think that in the long run, those who wish to build a Temple will be very hard to stop. That will be all the more true if they pick a different location than the Temple Mount, but it may be true in any case. It is similar to the case of a girl who wants to get married. Suppose only 14 of the 84 local eligible bachelors want to marry her. What do you think her chances are? Awfully good. If only one out of six (or fewer) Jews were interested in building a new Temple, I suspect they would succeed. And the book's discussion of the Temple scroll makes it clear that a Temple is by no means a minor or peripheral element of Judaism.So I think the Temple Mount has a potential for being a source of trouble not only in the past and present, but in the future as well. And this may be true just for nationalistic reasons, not merely for religious reasons. Not only that, I think that solemn assurances by a few Jewish leaders that the Jews will never rebuild their Temple anywhere would just make matters worse. I suspect such assurances would just make Judaism look inferior, less trustworthy, and more threatening.Of course, there is another badly missing perspective. Three of the four most famous Deities associated with this place are simply overlooked. The Temple Mount in Aelia Capitolina was the site of the Temple of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. I think the author ought to have discussed Them.

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