

**I will curse even the blessings you receive.
Indeed, I have already cursed them, because
you have not taken my warning to heart.**

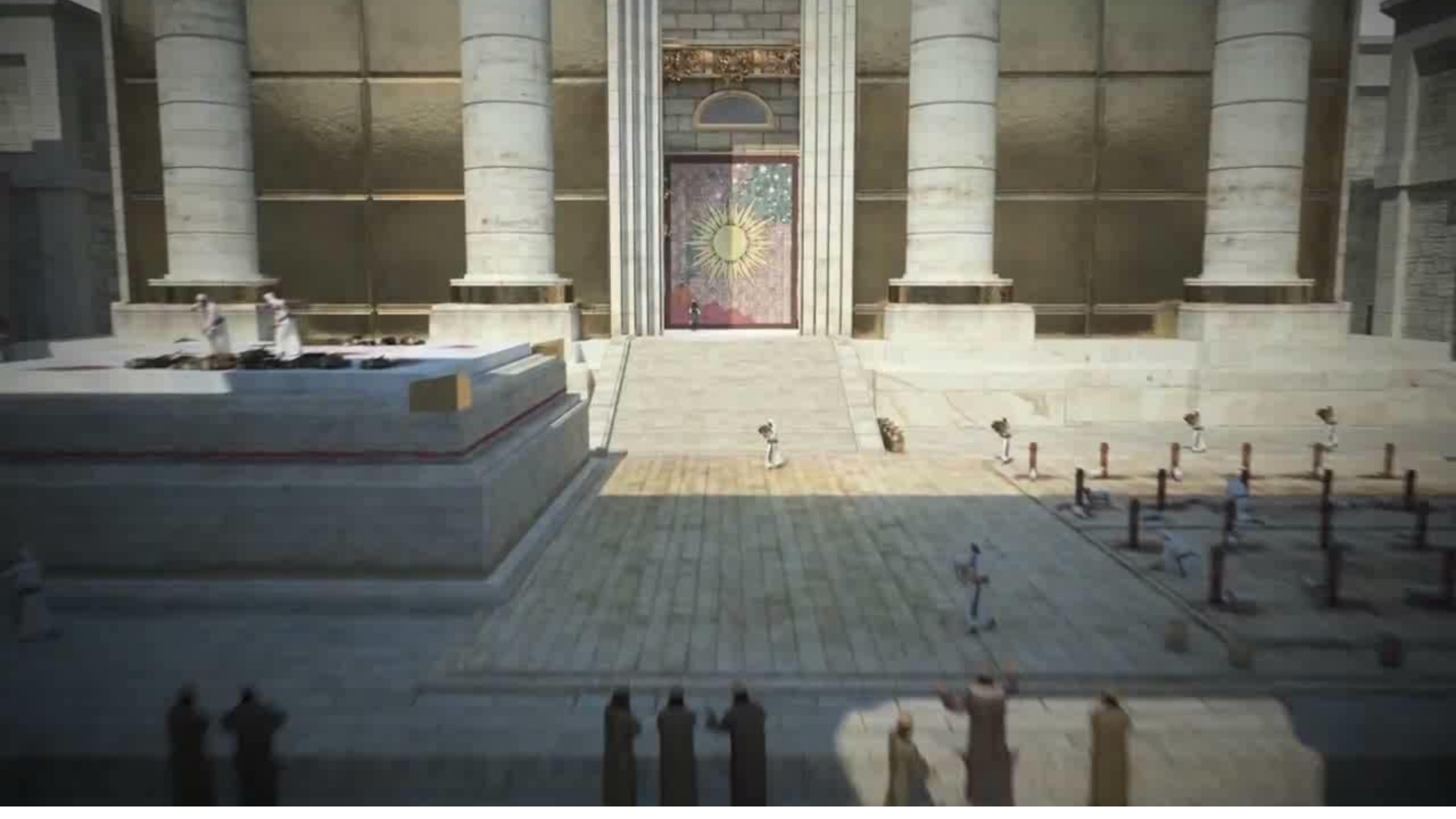
Malachi 2:2

A priest named Zechariah

- He is righteous in God's eyes. Luke 1:6**
- Childless and old. 1:7**
- He's fulfilling his priestly obligations. 1:8**
- Chosen by "lot" to burn incense. 1:9**
- A great crowd is praying outside. 1:10**







**Zechariah enters the Holy Place
to lift up the prayers of the
people.**

Ps. 141.2; Rev. 5:8

NO REASON FOR HOPE

- 722 YEARS OF EXILE OR FOREIGN DOMINATION
- Rome = most powerful ruler yet
- High Priest = Roman puppet
- 97% live below poverty level
- Zechariah + Elizabeth = old, barren
- Under God's curse (Malachi 2:2)



**“Don’t be afraid!
God has heard**

your prayer.” Lk. 1:13



New life in barrenness

New life for all humanity

¹⁵He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth. ¹⁶And he will turn many Israelites to the Lord their God. ¹⁷He will be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah. He will prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. Luke 1:15-17

**Another typical day,
another hopeless future.
But a faithful priest prayed
again!**

**Another typical day,
another hopeless future.
But a faithful priest prayed
again!
And the curse was broken.**

Malachi 4:5; Isaiah 40:3

The “LORD” refers to YHWH

**John 8:58 – “before Abraham was born,
I AM”**