

REVELATION 11

THE WITNESS OF JESUS

Revelation 11:1-2 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.² "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.

IS THE TEMPLE THE CHURCH?

Revelation 11 takes us to a Temple in Jerusalem. There are Jews carrying on Old Testament sacrifices just like Jesus, Daniel, Paul and now John promised it would be. If this is the church and it is one in Christ why are Jews and Gentiles segregated? And how is it that the worldwide church is localized to Jerusalem? And why are we back to a Temple and altar? No, it is a yet future event as Chapter 11 opens in Jerusalem. Something has happened that would start a World War if it happened this week.

✓ Daniel said so: Open with me to Daniel 9!

The Book of Daniel is actually one of the most authenticated books of the Old Testament, historically and archaeologically, but this is a convenient short-cut for our purposes here. It is critical to realize that the Book of Daniel existed in documented form almost five centuries before Christ was born.

Daniel, originally deported as a teenager (now near the end of the Babylonian captivity), was reading in the Book of Jeremiah. He understood that the seventy years of servitude were almost over and he began to pray for his people. The Angel Gabriel interrupted Daniel's prayer and gave him a four-verse prophecy that is unquestionably the

most remarkable passage in the entire Bible: Daniel 9:24-27. These four verses include the following segments:

- ✓ 9:24 The Scope of the entire prophecy;
- ✓ 9:25 The 69 Weeks;
- ✓ 9:26 An Interval between the 69th and 70th Week;
- ✓ 9:27 The 70th Week.

THE SCOPE

9:24: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy Place."

The idiom of a "week" of years was common in Israel as a "sabbath for the land," in which the land was to lie fallow every seventh year.¹ It was their failure to obey these laws that led to God sending them into captivity under the Babylonians². When did the Messiah present Himself as a King? On one specific day, Jesus arranges it! Note that the focus of this passage is upon "thy people and upon thy holy city," that is, upon Israel and Jerusalem. (It is not directed to the church.) The scope of this prophecy includes a broad list of things which clearly have yet to be completed.

THE FIRST 69 WEEKS

A very specific prediction occurs in 9:25: "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." This includes a mathematical prophecy. The Jewish (and Babylonian) calendars used a 360-day year;³ 69 weeks of 360-day years totals 173,880 days. In effect, Gabriel told Daniel that the interval between the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem until the presentation of the Messiah as King would be 173,880 days. The "Messiah the Prince" in the King James translation is actually the Meshiach Nagid, "The Messiah the King." (Nagid is first used of King Saul.)

¹ Leviticus 25; 26; Deut. 15.

² II Chronicles 36:20-21 2 Chronicles 36:20 And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, 21 to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

³ Genesis 7:24

A PROPHETIC BULL'S EYE!

The commandment to restore and build Jerusalem was given by Artaxerxes Longimanus on March 14, 445 BC⁴. (The emphasis in the verse on "the street" and "the wall" was to avoid confusion with other earlier mandates confined to rebuilding the Temple.) But when did the Messiah present Himself as a King? During the ministry of Jesus Christ there were several occasions in which the people attempted to promote Him as king, but He carefully avoided it. "Mine hour is not yet come." (John 6:15)

THE TIMELY TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Then one day He meticulously arranges it. On this particular day he rode into the city of Jerusalem riding on a donkey, deliberately fulfilling a prophecy by Zechariah that the Messiah would present Himself as king in just that way: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Zechariah 9:9. Whenever we might easily miss the significance of what was going on, the Pharisees come to our rescue. They felt that the overzealous crowd was blaspheming, proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah the King. (Luke 19:39) However, Jesus endorsed it!

"I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Luke 19:40 This is the only occasion that Jesus presented Himself as King. It occurred on April 6, 32 AD⁵

THE DIVINE PRECISION OF PROPHECY

When we examine the period between March 14, 445 b.c. and April 6, 32 AD, and correct for leap years, we discover that it is 173,880 days exactly, to the very day! How could Daniel have known this in advance? How could anyone have contrived to have this detailed prediction documented over three centuries in advance? But there's more.

THE INTERVAL

There appears to be a gap between the 69th week (verse 25) and the 70th week (verse 27): 9:26: "And after threescore and two weeks

⁴ Sir Robert Anderson's *Coming Prince* 1st noted this astounding number in 1894.

⁵ Tiberius Luke 3:1 appointed in AD14, 15th year AD 29; the 4th Passover AD 32.

shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." The sixty-two "weeks" follow the initial seven, so verse 26 deals with events after 69th week, but before the 70th. These events include the Messiah being killed and the city and sanctuary being destroyed. There is a remaining seven-year period to be fulfilled. Revelation 6-19 is essentially a detailing of that climactic period. As Jesus approached the city on the donkey, He also predicted the destruction of Jerusalem: For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. Luke 19:43-44

The Messiah was, of course, executed at the Crucifixion. "But not for Himself." The city and the sanctuary were destroyed 38 years later when the Roman legions under Titus Vespasian leveled the city of Jerusalem in 70 a.d., precisely as Daniel and Jesus had predicted. In fact, as one carefully examines Jesus' specific words, it appears that He held them accountable to know this astonishing prophecy in Daniel 9! "Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

THE 70TH WEEK

There is a remaining seven-year period to be fulfilled. This period is the most documented period in the entire Bible. The Book of Revelation, Chapters 6 through 19, is essentially a detailing of that climactic period. The interval between the 69th and 70th week continues, but it is increasingly apparent that it may soon be over. The more one is familiar with the numerous climactic themes of "end-time" prophecy, the more it seems that Daniel's 70th Week is on our horizon. Have you done your homework? Are you and your family prepared?⁶

- ✓ Christ said so: Matthew 24: 15-16 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),¹⁶ "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

⁶ Adapted from Missler.

- ✓ Paul said so: 2 Thessalonians 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

This Temple they spoke of is coming and that is why Jerusalem is such a hot piece of real estate to God and to Satan. Scholars of prophecy do not agree on all the details of future events. But the following summary is a fair representation of what many prophetic scholars believe as to the order of events:

1. The Rapture of the church (1 Cor. 15:51–58; 1 Thes. 4:13–18). This can occur at any time.
2. The leader of the ten European nations makes a seven-year agreement with Israel (Dan. 9:26–27).
3. After three-and-one-half years, he breaks the agreement (Dan. 9:27).
4. He moves to Jerusalem and sets up his image in the temple (2 Thes. 2:3–4; Rev. 13).
5. The Antichrist begins to control the world and forces all people to worship and obey him. At this time God sends great tribulation upon the earth (Matt. 24:21).
6. The nations gather at Armageddon to fight the Antichrist and Israel, but see the sign of Christ's coming and unite to fight Him (Zech. 12; Rev. 13:13–14; 19:11ff).
7. Jesus returns to the earth, defeats His enemies, is received by the Jews, and establishes His kingdom on earth (Rev. 19:11ff; Zech. 12:7–13:1). He will reign on earth for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1–5).

What happens to get this Temple in place and not destroy the Earth? Ezekiel 38-39 may have the clue!

Should these names be connected with the Soviet Union? One must first identify the areas against which Ezekiel prophesied and then determine the countries that occupy those land areas today. Ezekiel's does not point to "Russia" merely because the words sound similar. Neither should one identify "Meshech" with "Moscow" or "Tubal" with "Tobolsk." Ezekiel had historical places in mind (not modern-day names) and these areas must be located in Ezekiel's time. However, while one must avoid dogmatic assertions, three reasons suggest including the Soviet Union within Ezekiel's prophecy:

- (1) Some of the countries named by Ezekiel were located in what is now Russia.

- (2) The armies are said to come "from the far north" (Ezek. 38:6, 15; 39:2). This probably includes the land bridge between the Black and Caspian Seas, now part of the Soviet Union.
- (3) Ezekiel spoke of a coalition of several nations, many of whom are today aligned with or under the influence of the Soviet Union. These include Iran ("Persia"), Sudan and northern Ethiopia ("Cush"), Libya ("Put"), and Turkey ("Meshech," "Tubal," "Gomer," and "Beth Togarmah"). All these nations (see 38:2-3, 5-6), possibly led by the Soviet Union, will unite to attack Israel.

Ezekiel was describing a battle that will involve Israel's remotest neighbors. They will sense their opportunity to attack when Israel feels secure under the false protection of her covenant with the Antichrist sometime at the beginning of the seven-year period. The nations involved in the attack will include the Soviet Union, Turkey, Iran, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Libya. Ezekiel first pictured the invasion by Gog and his allies (38:1-16), and then described the judgment of Gog and his allies (38:17-39:29)⁷.

(11:1) Measuring speaks of someone setting an area aside or claiming for yourself; this could be for destruction, preparation for building, restoration, etc.

(11:2) There were four courts in the Temple each opening into the other until the Holy of Holies was reached. These courts were:

- ✓ The Courtyard of the Gentiles, which was the only place, non-Jews could enter at the penalty of death for violation. There was a fence with posted warnings on tablets that spoke of the death penalty for crossing over into the next court for any Gentile.
- ✓ The Courtyard of the Women was next. This was the extent of a woman's access to the Temple in those days.
- ✓ The Courtyard of the Israelites was next and marked the limit of where non-priestly men could enter.
- ✓ The Courtyard of the Priests was the final area. In this area were the laver, the brass altar of the burnt offering, and the Holy place. In the Temple proper were the 2 chambers: the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.
- ✓ Old Testament Worship centered on the Tabernacle and then the Temple. Divinely designed liturgy was carried on for 1,500 nearly unbroken years in the way Moses was told by God to do it on Mt. Sinai.

⁷ Bible Knowledge Commentary.

- ✓ The epicenter of that worship was the Holy Place. In the front half of it stood the Altar of Incense, Golden Lampstand and Table of Showbread. A curtain divided the room. This curtain was actually a finely woven rug 4 inches thick, 60 feet high and 40 feet wide. Massive and towering and declaring one clear message STAY OUT. No natural light ever penetrated its dark depths. Even the light of the ever-burning Lampstand never reached behind the veil.
- ✓ In better times the Shekinah Glory of the Presence of God made the Holiest of Holies behind the veil brighter than noonday. In all of Israel's history probably no more than 50 men had ever gone into the holy of Holies. David never went in, Daniel and Jeremiah never went in. Only the High Priest and then only once a year.
- ✓ Inside that room was a box covered with gold, containing the stone tablets of the Law, a pot of manna and Aaron's Rod that budded. Above that Ark of the Covenant stood two golden cherubim with wings shielding the mercy seat. Their faces gazing downward forever focusing upon the blood.
- ✓ When that day came for the High Priest to pass behind that veil. He was wearing bells on the hem of his garment to let the other priests know he was still alive as he was inside; garbed carefully in the God directed robes and priestly garments. With trembling hands cradling a basin of blood, veiled by a cloud of smoking incense burning in a pot he carried - the High Priest would enter.
- ✓ Sprinkling the blood on that mercy seat on behalf of all the people of God and hastening out. Why? The only purpose of the Veil was to keep people out of the Holy Presence of God. God was saying I AM HOLY. YOU ARE NOT. STAY OUT!

In God's panorama of the end in the Revelation of Jesus there is a curious reference to the period as a "week". "42 months", "1260 days" and "a time, times and a half". All of these are a reference to the 70th week of Daniel 9. The week is of course a week of years or seven years. The 42 months or 1260 days or time, times and a half are all references to half of these seven years. But in Jewish history the three and a half years is not only a time measurement for the future, it is also a memory of an event that deeply touched the Jews of the inter-testamental period. It was for 3 ½ years that the rebellion against the Syrian King Antiochus Epiphanes desecration of the Temple was waged. The brave soldiers of Judas Maccabaeus fought from June of 168 BC until December of 165 BC and through some amazing victories drove out the pagan intrusion into the worship of the Lord. Many martyrs fell during this time that is described prophetically four hundred years before it took place in Daniel's Prophecy chapters 7-12.

- I. GOD KEEPS HIS WORD 11:1-2
- A. God has staked His name on one nation – Israel
 - B. Jeremiah 31:1-2 “At the same time,” says the Lord, “I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people.” 2 Thus says the Lord: “The people who survived the sword Found grace in the wilderness—Israel, when I went to give him rest.”
 - C. God has also chosen a city to associate with: Jerusalem
 - 1. City of Melchisadek, type of Christ and Abraham’s offering Issac
 - 2. City of David
 - 3. City of Solomon and temple
 - 4. God calls it “My city”
 - 5. Place of Christ’s crucifixion
 - 6. sacred to: Jews, Christians, Moslems
 - 7. A.D. 70 3rd (Herod) temple destroyed [586 B.C. first (Solomon), second Zerubbubel]
 - 8. A.D. 685-91 Dome of the Rock
 - 9. A.D. 1520-66 Sulleman the Magnificent
 - D. Now, look at Rev. 11:1-2 - God says there will be another temple.
- ✓ Daniel said so: 9:27, 12:11
 - ✓ Christ said so: Mt. 24:15-16
 - ✓ Paul said so: 2 Th. 2:4
 - ✓ British statesman Disraeli asked to defend Bible one word: Israel
 - ✓ LESSON: GOD KEEPS HIS WORD! ARE YOU TRUSTING HIM?

- II. GOD PROTECTS HIS OWN - 11:3-7
- A. God always has witness - Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Job, Moses, Samuel....
- ✓ God provides power:
 - ✓ Elijah - drought and fire
 - ✓ Moses - death and disease
 - ✓ God has perfect plan “finished”, “tetelestai” Jesus, “finished course” - Paul, “to wit God in Christ”
- B. Who are the 2 witnesses? There are several combinations:
- ✓ Zerubabel and Joshua as mentioned in Zech. 4
 - ✓ Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (II Kings 2:9-11) because neither saw death. And both were fearless prophets during times of apostasy (Jude 14-15)
 - ✓ Most likely Moses and Elijah because of presence on Mt. Of transfiguration (Mt. 17); position in God's plan (head of law and head of prophets) and power given in ministry (Elijah fire and drought; Moses plagues). It is intriguing to read that the two at the

tomb of Jesus (Luke 24:4, 7) and the two at the ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:9-11) were "men" not stated as angels? Also there is a very strong prophesy of Elijah's coming in Mal. 3:-3 and 4:5-6.

- ✓ If 2 witnesses 1st half then the 144,000 may be their converts
- ✓ The first reference to the "beast" who appears 36 times in the book is here in Revelation 11:7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.

- ✓ LESSON: GOD PROTECTS HIS OWN TO THE FINISH. ARE YOU RESTING IN HIM AS YOU FINISH THE RACE?

(11:7) Finished:

- ✓ JACOB FOLLOWED HIS SHEPHERD: Genesis 48:15-16 And he blessed Joseph, and said: "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has fed me all my life long to this day, 16 The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; Let my name be named upon them, And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."
- ✓ DAVID FINISHED GOD'S PURPOSES FOR HIS LIFE Acts 13:36 "For David, after he had served [this word is huperetes under-rower] (God's purposes in) his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption;
- ✓ PAUL FINISHED THE RACE COURSE GOD LAID OUT FOR HIM: 2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.
- ✓ JESUS CONFIDENTLY CRIED: John 19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

III. GOD GIVES ENDLESS LIFE -11:8-14

- A. Abraham's faith Romans 4:17 (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;
- B. God's promise: Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.
- ✓ LESSON: GOD GIVES ENDLESS LIFE! ARE YOU HOPING?

- C. There is a quake at the end of each of the series of judgments: the 6th seal, the 7th trumpet and the 7th bowl. In 11:13 it may be the salvation of a Jewish remnant.

IV. GOD EXPECTS WORSHIP 11:15-19

- A. Heaven is a place of worship where God rules and reigns - v. 15-16

- 1. Are you experiencing heaven as you worship Him?
- 2. Worship flows out of the wonders of God's revealing Himself:

- B. Are you overflowing with God?

- 1. He is eternal in character - v. 17a
- 2. He is awesome in power - v. 17b
- 3. He is righteous in judgment - v. 18
- 4. He is mighty in faithfulness - v. 19

- ✓ Power
- ✓ Plan
- ✓ Promise
- ✓ Punishment

- C. Well what is our response? (11:19 actually starts chapter 12).

- 1. God keeps word = ARE WE TRUSTING?
- 2. God protects His own = ARE WE RESTING?
- 3. God gives endless life = ARE WE HOPING?

God expects worship = ARE WE ADORING?