

46. The Book of Revelation—11:1-2

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Tonight, we come to Revelation Chapter 11—a very exciting chapter to say the least.

This chapter tells us that in the last days (the days just prior to Jesus' return to establish His Kingdom)—Israel will be back in the land, they will once again be in possession of Jerusalem (for the most part), the Temple will be rebuilt, and sacrifices will again be offered to God.

Through the Middle Ages Reformed theologians took all of the promises and prophecies that applied to the nation of Israel and ascribed them to the Church because—for all intents and purposes Israel had been destroyed and was out of the picture biblically speaking.

That became a real problem for these theologians when it came to all of the prophetic passages concerning God's future plans for Israel—as they desperately sought to yank them out of the Bible, twist them into allegory and stuff them back into the Bible as pertaining to the Church.

They began talking about “*God's Israel—the Church!*” and that Israel was never in the plan of God in that she was always simply a metaphor for the Church and therefore any talk of God's plan for Israel (especially in the last days) was erroneous.

Yet, listen to what Paul said to the Christians living in Rome—

Romans 10:1 (NKJV)

¹ Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

Now, if the Church is Israel, this statement by Paul makes no sense—“*My hearts desire and prayer to God for the Church is that they may be saved?!?*”

The Scriptures are clear that God isn't done with the nation of Israel—

Romans 11:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ² God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew...

(Please reread all of Romans 11 to get the full impact of Paul's treatise on the subject.)

Now, as we come to Revelation 11—let's set the scene and remember that *Israel* is in view not the Church.

The *place* is Jerusalem—the *time* is the first half of the Tribulation Period (Chapters 10-14 are a flashback).

One of the things that makes this passage so exciting is that it confirms that the Temple *will* be rebuilt in Jerusalem—I believe with the help and blessing of the Antichrist when he makes his appearance on the world scene.

Many believe that the covenant the Antichrist makes with Israel as prophesied in Daniel 9:27 will include a provision allowing them to rebuild their Temple on the Temple Mount.

Daniel 9:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week [7-year period]; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

Daniel 9:27 says that the Antichrist will cause the sacrifices and offerings to cease—implying a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem.

I believe that Ezekiel 38-39 prophesy an invasion of the Middle East *prior* to the Antichrist rising to power as the leader of a one-world government.

As you read the language of Ezekiel 38 & 39 there will be some sort of nuclear exchange that will so terrify the people of the world (the unthinkable has happened!) it will compel them to federate under a one-world government—enter the Antichrist!

This will also lead to a 7-year peace treaty that the Antichrist (and by extension his world government) will make with the nation of Israel (as described in Daniel 9:27).

This will no doubt be in part to thank them for defeating the evil army that sought to not only destroy Israel—but also to bring the world under *its* control (at this point the Antichrist will pass himself off as the ultimate 'good guy' and 'savior of the world' and the world will respond by making him their leader).

I believe that this defeat of the invading armies spoken of in Ezekiel 38 & 39 could actually 'pave the way' for the government of the Antichrist to be established.

You see, after the limited nuclear exchange prophesied in Ezekiel 38-39, many will be forced to believe that the world must come together in a one-world government before it winds up destroying itself with any further nuclear conflicts, but also to finally solve the existential threat of 'climate change'!

But listen, as Bible believing Christians, we know better as to Who will be the cause of this invading armies' defeat!

The invasion of Ezekiel 38 & 39 will be directed at Israel and should destroy it (Russia, Iran, northern Egypt and other Muslim nations)—but God will fight for His people Israel and destroy 5/6's of this Russian led armies.

This will bring about a spiritual revival as many Jews will believe that God intervened to save His people from this invasion of their enemies—which will cause many Jews to return to Judaism as their national religion (today *secularism* is their 'national religion').

This will lead to a national push to rebuild their Temple like never before so they can begin the sacrifices and offerings once again to Yahweh the God of Israel.

The rebuilding of the Jewish Temple has been a serious objective for roughly 35 years or so—but will shift into high gear when the Antichrist signs the treaty with the nation of Israel allowing them to rebuild their Temple on the Temple Mount and fulfill the prophecy in Daniel 9:27 of a rebuilt Temple.

However, a rebuilt Temple wasn't just prophesied by Daniel—this was something that Jesus Himself affirmed when He mentioned the prophecy of Daniel in the Olivet Discourse—

Matthew 24:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ "Therefore when you see [future not Antiochus Epiphanes] the '*abomination of desolation*,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand)—[a reference to Daniel 9:27]

The "**holy place**" is a reference to the "*Holy of Holies*" where the Ark of the Covenant sat in the Tabernacle and then later the Temple.

Of course, for there to be a '*Holy of Holies*' that the Antichrist will desecrate by putting his image in—it obviously implies a rebuilt Temple.

Paul the Apostle also prophesied that the Temple would be rebuilt and desecrated by the Antichrist—

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 (NKJV)

³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 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.

In Revelation 11 John is standing in front of this rebuilt Temple!

This must have blown John's mind because in 70 A.D. he saw General Titus Vespasian and the Roman army destroy the Temple (and the entire city of Jerusalem)—and now he's transported into the future and sees the Temple rebuilt!

Please understand that this is not a vision (as in an allegory) but an actual brick and mortar Temple that John is seeing—how do we know that?

Because he was told to measure it!—

Revelation 11:1 (NKJV)

¹ 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."

"Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod..."

The word for '**reed**' is *kalamos* and refers to a reed like plant that grew in the Jordan Valley to a height of fifteen to twenty feet. These reeds were hollow and lightweight—yet rigid enough to be used as a walking *stick* or *staff* (mentioned in Ezekiel 29:6).

These reeds, because they were long and lightweight, were also ideal for use as measuring rods.

In Ezekiel's vision, an angel used such a rod to measure the Millennial Temple (Ezekiel 40:3–43:17).

Revelation 11:1 (NKJV)

¹ 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."

In the New Testament there are two words which are translated *temple*.

The actual Temple proper (the building itself) was called *naos* (the word used here in Revelation 11:1)—a relatively small *building* in comparison to the whole Temple compound or precinct.

The Temple proper contained 2 compartments—the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant had once occupied—and may again someday. The Temple sat on the top of Mt. Moriah which is still called the *Temple Mount* to this day.

Now the Temple proper or *naos* was surrounded by thirty-five acres which together were called the *Temple precincts*—the Greek word for the whole area is the word "*hieron*."

The "**altar**" is probably the *brazen* altar of sacrifice, located outside the Temple proper (the actual building) since that is where "**those who worship**" in the Temple would have gathered.

The people were never permitted to enter the Temple proper—only the priests could enter the Holy Place (where the altar of incense stood)—and only the High Priest could enter the second compartment, the Holy of Holies, and then only once a year on Yom Kippur—the Day of Atonement.

The worshipers in John's vision depict a remnant of orthodox Jews alive during the Tribulation who are worshipping God.

What is the purpose for John being told to measure *this* Temple? It obviously wasn't to determine its physical dimensions since none are given—so then why?

First of all, to show us that it's a *literal* Temple not a symbolic one (many scholars believe this is a symbolic temple that represents the Church). But secondly, I believe it represents how God sometimes marks or 'measures' things out for judgment and destruction.

Amos 7:7-9, 17 (NKJV)

⁷ Thus He showed me: Behold, the Lord stood on a wall *made* with a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand. ⁸ And the Lord said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said: "Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel; I will not pass by them anymore. ⁹ The high places of Isaac shall be desolate, And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste. I will rise with the sword against the house of Jeroboam"...

¹⁷ "Therefore thus says the Lord: 'Your wife [speaking to Amaziah the King of Israel] shall be a harlot in the city; Your sons and daughters shall fall by the sword; Your land shall be divided by *survey* line; You shall die in a defiled land; And Israel shall surely be led away captive From his own land.' "

John was told to measure the Temple of God, including the altar, and those who worship in it—I believe to mark them out for judgment.

Why does God mark out His Temple for judgment?—because this is a *defiled* Temple!

It is a place where orthodox Jews, who have rejected the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ as atonement for their sins—are offering the blood of animals which God now considers defiled and an abomination (the New Covenant is in place by this time rendering the Old Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant as 'null and void').

Isaiah 66:1-4 (NKJV)

¹ Thus says the Lord: "Heaven *is* My throne, And earth *is* My footstool. Where *is* the house that you will build Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? ² For all those *things* My hand has made, And all those *things* exist," Says

the Lord. "But on this *one* will I look: On *him who is* poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word.
³"He who kills a bull *is as if* he slays a man; He who sacrifices a lamb, *as if* he breaks a dog's neck; He who offers a grain offering, *as if* he offers swine's blood; He who burns incense, *as if* he blesses an idol. Just as they have chosen their own ways, And their soul delights in their abominations, ⁴So will I choose their delusions, And bring their fears on them; Because, when I called, no one answered, When I spoke they did not hear; But they did evil before My eyes, And chose *that* in which I do not delight."

So here we see the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem as prophesied by Daniel and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me stop here and give you a quick history of the Jewish Temple.

The Five Jewish Temples

There are actually **5 Jewish Temples** that are talked about in Scripture.

▪ **The First Temple**

Solomon built the **first Temple** on Jerusalem's Mount Moriah in around 1050 B.C.

Roughly, four hundred and sixty years later, the Babylonians utterly destroyed Jerusalem and with it that Temple in 586 B.C.

▪ **The Second Temple**

After the Babylonian captivity was over and the Jews were allowed to return to the land of Israel—the building of the **second temple** began in around 536 B.C. under Zerubbabel and Joshua (often referred to as "Zerubbabel's Temple").

It was completed in 519 B.C.—but was a relatively low budget operation when compared with glory and expense of Solomon's magnificent structure (considered a wonder of the world at that time).

▪ **The Third Temple**

Five-hundred years later, King Herod the Great shows up and begins building, what some scholars and historians refer to as, the "**third**" temple in 20 B.C. The Jewish leaders refer to it as the 'second temple' refurbished.

The reason they say this is because it really wasn't a new build—but rather a massive reconstruction project of Zerubbabel's Temple.

Wanting to garner favor with the Jewish people, King Herod renovated, expanded and greatly beautified the Temple—a project that took 46 years to complete. Jesus referred to this Temple when He said, "*There shall not be left one stone standing upon another.*" (See Matthew 24:2)

Thirty-eight years after Jesus' resurrection, His prophecy came to pass—while sacking the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the Romans set the Temple on fire.

The fire was so hot that it caused the gold in the ceiling to melt and run down the Temple walls into the cracks of its massive stones. The soldiers pulled down every stone from the walls to extract the gold—fulfilling Jesus' prophecy to the letter.

I think that most evangelicals refer to *Solomon's* Temple as the **first Temple**; *Zerubbabel's* Temple as the **second Temple** and *Herod's* as the **third Temple** (the one destroyed in 70 A.D.)

▪ The Fifth Temple

We jump to the 5th Temple, which The Lord Himself will build during the Millennial Kingdom (Ezekiel 40–48; Haggai 2:9; Zechariah 6:12–13)

There are some orthodox Jews who will not accept any Millennial Temple as legitimate unless it is built by the Messiah Himself (that's why they aren't on board with a Jewish Temple built by the State of Israel (i.e., 'built by man').

Of course, *they are waiting* for the Messiah to come—whereas ***we know He has already come—and is coming again!*** When He establishes His Kingdom at His Second Coming—He will at that time authorize the building of the Millennial Temple.

Since only believing Jews and Gentiles will be allowed to enter the Millennial Kingdom when Jesus returns—all the Jews will be 'messianic Jews'—believers in Yeshua Hamashiach (Jesus the Messiah) and will rejoice in the building of the new [Millennial] Temple!

▪ The Fourth Temple

But ***there is a fourth Temple***—the ***Tribulation Temple*** which is yet to be built.

The Tribulation Temple will be built early in the first half of the Tribulation under the patronage and protection of the Antichrist so that orthodox Jews can once again practice their faith by offering sacrifices according to the Mosaic Law.

However, in the middle of the last 7 years, the Antichrist will enter the rebuilt Temple, stop the sacrifices to God Almighty, he will then set up his image in the Holy of Holies and demand to be worshipped as God.

This is the abomination that causes desolation (the abomination that renders the Temple defiled and unusable for the worship of God) and will officially begin the last 3 ½ years of the 70th Week of Daniel (42 months of 30 days equaling 1260 days) known as the Great Tribulation.

Matthew 24:15-18, 21 (NKJV)

¹⁵ "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. ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes...

²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

There is a lot of excitement among many orthodox Jews in Israel to build what they call the "Third Temple" (it is really the 4th Temple—the Tribulation Temple).

I have personally been to the Temple Institute in Jerusalem several times—if you go there, you can see preparations for this fourth Temple being made even now. Roughly, seventy-five percent of all instruments needed for Temple worship, according to Old Testament regulations—are completed.

They have two yeshivas (orthodox Jewish seminaries), which are training young men to be priests who have the last name of “Cohen” (a name meaning “priest”)—to sacrifice animals in the Temple tradition.

Why? Because the Orthodox Jewish community understands that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin—

Leviticus 17:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.' [See also Hebrews 9:22]

Since they do not believe Jesus is the Messiah who died for their sins, they realize they must make animal sacrifices for the forgiveness of their sins—but that can only be done in a rebuilt Temple.

The main obstacle standing in the way of them building this Temple is that many orthodox Jews believe that the Muslim Dome of the Rock shrine (not mosque) sits on the spot where Solomon’s Temple once stood.

The Jewish people understand, that if they touch one stone in the Dome of the Rock—it will start a holy war to end all wars!

So how will they accomplish this rebuilding of the Temple of God without touching the Dome of the Rock?

Next time we will look at this and what many call the most volatile 35 acres of land on planet earth!

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

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