

47. The Book of Revelation—11:3-6

A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
(6-30-21)

For the audio & video for this weeks' study click [here](#).

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 7-year 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)

Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; 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 at the mid-point of the 7-year covenant the Antichrist will cause the sacrifices and offerings to the God of Israel to cease—implying a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem.

The main obstacle standing in the way of building this Temple is that the Jews believe that the Muslim Dome of the Rock shrine sits on the spot where Solomon's Temple once stood. Because Muslims believe it's the place from where Muhammad ascended to heaven—it is among the most sacred shrines in the Islamic world.

Every Jew knows that if you tamper with this shrine in any way—you start a holy war to end all holy wars! So how are the Jewish people going to erect a new Temple on the spot where Solomon's Temple was built—which they believe is now occupied by the Dome of the Rock?

Remember, they believe to be legitimate this new Temple *has* to be built on the same site that Solomon's Temple was located. So how do they build a new Temple without removing the Dome of the Rock and starting WWIII?

Well, let me stop and give you an alternative view of where the Temple of Solomon originally stood.

Ever since I was saved, the traditional view (which I had no reason to doubt) was that Solomon's Temple sat on, what we commonly call, the Temple Mount. But a few years ago, I was introduced to an alternative view of where Solomon's Temple was originally located—a view that is embraced by many Jewish and non-Jewish archaeologists and scholars alike.

Christian scholars like author and apologist like Frank Turek has embrace it—as well as biblical explorer Bob Cornuke (check out “The Temple-Bob Cornuke” on YouTube).

Even Chuck Missler posted Bob Cornuke's presentation on his website—'[Khouse.org](#)'

This is not to say that this view is without any controversy—but I’ve watched Cornuke’s presentation several times and I must admit it presents some very compelling arguments for why Solomon’s Temple didn’t sit on the Temple Mount—at all!

Those who embrace this view rightly point out that traditions are often wrong—and that for hundreds of years the traditional site of where people (Jews and Gentiles alike) have always believed Solomon’s Temple originally sat—is also a tradition that is wrong.

So then, where did the Temple of Solomon originally sit?

Well as I just said, tradition says that the Temple sat on the Temple Mount—but the Bible says so did the Roman Legion also occupy an area on the Temple Mount. History records that the Tenth Roman Legion (6000 soldiers) was stationed on the Temple Mount in the Fortress of Antonia. Often accompanying each Roman Legion there were support staff that could have numbered upwards of 4000 people.

Many people have challenged the idea that 10,000 people could have been housed in the Fortress of Antonia—in a tiny building occupying a 3-acre plot of ground. They believe that the Roman compound took up the entire 35-acre piece of real estate we call the Temple Mount.

So then where did the Temple of Solomon sit?

Many believe it was originally located 600 feet to the south of the Temple Mount in the old city of David.

David captured the Jebusite stronghold of Jebus and made it his capital—later renaming it Jerusalem. This is where many now believe the original Temple was located. Again, there are many compelling reasons to believe this—check out Bob Cornuke’s presentation to see what I’m talking about (the 30:49 video).

Now even though I said there is compelling evidence that Solomon’s Temple could have been built to the south of the Temple Mount in the original city of David—it is not a settled fact by any means. You see, thirty-eight years ago, after spending sixteen years studying the Temple Mount area, a physicist and archaeologist at Hebrew University named Dr. Asher Kauffman came to some remarkable conclusions (also not without controversy).

In his landmark article which appeared in the March/April 1983 issue of *Biblical Archaeological Review*, Dr. Kauffman declared that while the Dome of the Rock has been assumed to sit on the sacred site of the Holy of Holies—the true location is actually one hundred meters to the north.

What is one hundred meters north of the Dome of the Rock?—a small gazebo-like structure, below which (Kauffman maintains) is the only other place the original bedrock of what was once known as the threshing floor of Ornan is close to the surface.

You remember how Satan moved in the heart of David to number the people of Israel—which angered the LORD and brought God’s judgment upon the nation.

As the judging angel of the LORD stood above Jerusalem (above the threshing floor of Ornan) with a drawn sword David pleaded with the LORD to stop the judgment—which God graciously granted.

In his desire to thank the LORD for His mercy, David purchased Ornan’s threshing floor to build an altar upon it and offer animal sacrifices to the LORD (see 1 Chronicles 21).

This piece of ground eventually became the place where Solomon built the Temple. As I just said, Dr. Kauffman declared almost 40 years ago that he believes the true location of Solomon's Temple was one hundred meters north of the Dome of the Rock—the place where a small gazebo-like structure now stands.

Again, this is the only other place, Dr. Kauffman claims, the original bedrock of what was once known as the threshing floor of Ornan is that close to the surface.

As opposed to the jagged rock over which the Dome of the Rock is built—the stone one hundred meters to the north is flat providing a much more likely setting for the Ark of the Covenant within the Holy of Holies.

Not only more logical—this site seems more historical.

You see, according to the Mishna (the highly esteemed book of Jewish oral traditions)—when the High Priest stood in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), he could look from the Holy of Holies, through the door of the Temple, and see the Eastern Gate directly before him (in the line of sight).

The results of a secret excavation in 1970 confirmed that the original Eastern Gate is directly below the present Eastern Gate. This makes Kauffman's assertion even more intriguing—for if you stand one hundred meters north of the Dome of the Rock, looking towards the Mount of Olives—the Eastern Gate is directly in front of you in plain view (I have personally done this).

In addition, when the Muslims built the gazebo-like structure in 10th century A.D.—they gave it two names: the “*Dome of the Spirits*”, and the “*Dome of the Tablets*.” Thus, even Islam seems to have recognized this site as the spot where the tablets (the Ten Commandments held within the Ark of the Covenant) and the Spirit (the *Shekinah* glory of God over the Ark of the Covenant) had been.

In other words, many believe that the Dome of the Spirits was built on the very spot where the Holy of Holies once sat! So, according to Kauffman and other scholars, the Temple could be rebuilt, and the Dome of the Rock would not have to be moved one inch and could remain standing exactly where it has for the last 1330 years.

And the reason being is that if the new Temple was built 100 meters to the north of the Dome of the Rock—it would put the Dome of the Rock in the ‘*outer courtyard*’ of the new Temple—which is extremely interesting when you continue reading in Revelation 11:

Revelation 11:1-2 (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. ² **But leave out (the Greek is literally—“cast out or throw 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.**

We are dealing here with that period that the Lord Jesus spoke of in Luke 21:24—

Luke 21:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

In 1967, Israel, once again forced to fight overwhelming odds for its very survival, took on Egypt, Syria and Jordan in a short war that was fought from June 5th through the 10th—known as the “Six-Day War.”

Israel won a decisive victory resulting in the capture of the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, West Bank, Old City of Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. At this point Jerusalem was finally and firmly back under Jewish control for the first time in 1900 years!

That was a very exciting moment for Bible believing Christians who immediately thought that the *"times of the Gentiles"* trampling on and controlling Jerusalem was over and Jesus was coming very soon!

However, almost immediately General Moshe Dayan, in a misguided attempt to offer an 'olive branch' to the Muslim community—let them retain control of the thirty-five-acre Temple Mount.

Thus, the *"times of the Gentiles"* continues to this day.

FYI—the *"times of the Gentiles"* began in 606 B.C., when Israel first went into captivity, and it seems that it will continue until Jesus Christ returns to deliver the Holy City and redeem Israel (Zechariah 14).

"And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months."

"Forty-two months" is 1260 days (a prophetic year is 12 months of 30 days each).

One author said this—

"This trampling of Jerusalem by Gentiles probably takes place in the last half of the final 7-year period described by Daniel 11:26–27—when the Antichrist pours out his fury on the people of Israel (as described in Revelation 12:13–17 and Matthew 24:15–28). And they will tread the holy city underfoot: Greek scholar A.T. Robertson said that to tread underfoot means 'to trample with contempt.'"

Revelation 11:3 (NKJV)

³ And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

Right after the Rapture takes place there won't be any true believers in Jesus Christ left on the earth and since God never leaves Himself *without* a witness—He immediately sends two witnesses to the earth.

Why are there two witnesses? Because *"In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established"* (2 Corinthians 13:1). Thus—

- *Two spies of the twelve commissioned were correct (Numbers 13).*
- *Joshua sent in two spies to scope out the land (Joshua 2:1).*
- *There were two angels in the tomb on Easter morning (John 20:12).*
- *Jesus sent out His witnesses two by two (Mark 6:7).*

Verse 3 tells us—it will be their responsibility to **prophesy**.

We make the mistake of thinking that prophesy is only foretelling or predicting the future—and that was part of what a prophet did when God sent them to speak on His behalf. But most of what the prophets did when they spoke for God was simply to declare His words to His people.

In other words most of their ministry consisted not in ‘foretelling’ but in ‘forth-telling’—speaking forth, proclaiming, or preaching the Word of God. These two men are called ‘**prophets**’ in the Old Testament sense—calling primarily the nation of Israel to repent and return to the true God of Israel.

The fact that they are wearing ‘**sackcloth**’ (as many O.T. prophets wore when they proclaimed God’s Word) tells us that their ministry won’t be *joyful* but *mournful*. You see, they will be hated by most of the people of the world at that time who don’t want to hear what they have to say—but will have no choice.

They are also called the “**two witnesses.**”

A witness testifies to something they have seen (hold on to that).

The Two Witnesses will conduct their ministry during the *first* half of the Tribulation Period and will proclaim to the world that the disasters occurring during the first half of the Tribulation are in fact—the judgments of God (Explain from Revelation 6:17).

They will warn the people of the world at that time that the most severe judgments are yet future (second half of the Tribulation Period) known as “the Great Tribulation”. They will no doubt proclaim that after God’s final outpouring of judgments (if people don’t repent)—will lead to the final and eternal judgment—Hell (Lake of Fire).

Yet, at the same time, they will preach the gospel, calling people to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—and at least 144,000 Jews will be converted (no doubt millions more).

“**My two witnesses**” (verse 3) is very strong in the Greek and can be translated—“**The two witnesses of Mine**” indicating they have been used by God before.

Let me just say again—when the Rapture takes place (before the 70th Week of Daniel—the final 7-years begins) the Church will be gone—who will bring the light of the gospel to the world?

God never leaves Himself without a witness, so He *recalls* “**The Two**” for special service during the first half of the 70th Week of Daniel to preach the gospel to Israel and to the world. They will preach a message of repentance clothed in sackcloth the same way the O.T. prophets would preach when they were mourning the sin of God’s people.

Here they are mourning how the Jews are following a false Messiah thinking he’s their true Messiah—even as Jesus warned the leaders of Israel who had rejected Him—“*I came in My Father’s name and you did not receive Me, another will come in his own name and him you will receive.*”

The message of the Two Witnesses will be to call people to repentance before it’s too late—before the judgments of God wipes them out. Of course, this message will be completely out of step with the message of the Antichrist and those following him (including the liberal apostate church which will be left on the earth after the Rapture) have been proclaiming to the world.

Their message will be one of world peace and unity—and for awhile, the Antichrist will seem to have brought the earth into a time of peace and prosperity—utopia!

But as the Apostle Paul warned—

1 Thessalonians 5:3 (NKJV)

³For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

Revelation 11:3-4 (NKJV)

³ And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." ⁴ **These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.**

The Two Witnesses become the only light in the world ("two lampstands") for a time proclaiming God's truth when the world is now solidly under the Antichrist's control—and Satan can't do a thing about it! (John 1:5)

When the angel called these Two witnesses—2 olive trees and 2 lampstands it would have immediately taken John back to what Zechariah said—

Zechariah 4:11-14 (NKJV)

¹¹ Then I answered and said to him, "What *are* these two olive trees--at the right of the lampstand and at its left?" ¹² And I further answered and said to him, "What *are these* two olive branches that *drip* into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden *oil* drains?" ¹³ Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these *are*?" And I said, "No, my lord." ¹⁴ So he said, "These *are* the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth." [referring to Zerubbabel and Joshua at that time]

These Two Witnesses will in essence "**stand beside the Lord**" as His anointed lights shining the light of God's truth in the spiritual and moral darkness of those days as God's spokesmen.

"**The two olive trees and the two lampstands**"—is an idiom of how these 2 will be supplied by an inexhaustible supply of oil—in other words, they will be continually being filled with the Holy Spirit to give the light of God's truth for the duration of their ministry (no one will be able to stop them from giving God's light).

Revelation 11:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵ **And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.** ⁶ **These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.**

For the first 1260 days of the 70th Week of Daniel—these two witnesses will be *indestructible*.

It is impossible to be dogmatic about the specific identity of these two prophet/preachers—we know that they have served God in the past ("*The two witnesses of Mine*").

Who Are They?

It's important that we get the identity of these Two Witnesses right—so come back next time and we'll see!

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.

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

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