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We come to the pinnacle of our worship service when we have the opportunity to look into the Word of God and I would invite you to take your Bibles and turn to Revelation chapter 11. We have been going through the book of Revelation the *Apokalypsis Iesou Cristou*, the unveiling of Jesus Christ since January.

This is an amazing book and I want to remind you that the purpose of this book is to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ. In the gospels our Lord was revealed to us in his humiliation, and in the final book of the New Testament he is revealed to us in his glorification. And ultimately we see this book describing the events that will lead up to the very last days of human history, to the Second Coming of Christ when he comes to establish his glorious kingdom on earth and ultimately we read how that will bridge into the eternal state.

When he came the first time he came to seek and to save the lost. When he comes again there will be many that will come to him, but primarily he will come in judgment.

You will recall thus far that in the first three chapters of the book of Revelation the Lord reveals to us great truths concerning the Church, and then we see the Church disappear from the scene. In chapters four through five we are taken into the throne room of heaven where we witness the preparations for divine judgment that God will pour out upon the earth. Then in chapter six the scroll is taken from the Father by the Son which has the title deed to the universe and the seal judgments are broken. And in chapter seven there are the 144,000 that God sets apart, the Jewish evangelists that will understand finally who Christ is and who will preach the gospel during the days of the tribulation. Then in chapters eight and nine we have the seventh seal revealing the trumpet judgments, and these judgments continue to be poured out during the first part of the tribulation. And then we came to chapter 10 which is an interlude that goes through verse 14 of chapter 11 where we are at today, and this will be an interlude between the sixth and the seventh trumpet judgments. At the end of those trumpet judgments, of course, the bowl judgments will be poured out and the Lord will return.

Before I read the text to you and begin to unpack it a bit for you this morning, let me say a few things to help you understand where the Lord is going here in this amazing record. After the interlude of chapter 10—remember, where the strong angel has vowed unto the Lord that there shall be delay no longer and the seventh angel will then sound his trumpet here later on in chapter 11—there is an amazing statement that is made here in verse 15, if you will just look at that, first. In Revelation 11 verse 15 we read that, “The seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.’”¹ And then we know that the final bowl judgments will be poured out and the Lord will return.

¹ Revelation 11:15.

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So we see this, now, in this interlude, this time where the earth will be in its darkest hour. This will be a time when not only the people of the earth have endured unimaginable judgments from God, but also they will have endured the deceptions of the antichrist. And when the antichrist reaches the zenith of his power having defeated all of the opposition as we read in Revelation chapter 12 and chapter 13, finally the disciples' question that they asked Jesus in Acts chapter one an verse six will be answered. Remember when they asked, "Lord, is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom of Israel?" And the answer is, "Yes. Now it is time."

Now I want you to remember that here in the book of Revelation the Lord is revealing the pre kingdom judgments consistent with his covenant purposes to Israel, not the Church. These events detail the original prophecy that Daniel received, you will recall, from the angelic messenger. In Daniel 9:24 we read that, "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression."² And he goes on to say, "to anoint the most holy place."³ All of this has to do with Israel. The Church has been snatched away.

Even the time of 1260 days or the three and a half years that we will read about here in chapter 11, parallels the prophecy of Daniel in Daniel chapter seven and verse 25 and chapter 12 verse seven. Therefore although Israel is currently blinded (God has judicially hardened their hearts as we read about in Romans 11) all through the apocalypse, you must understand that we see the nation of Israel having a unique position of divine favor as God sets into motion the pre kingdom judgments. We will see that they have been measured by God for preservation and protection and blessing. So, again, be very careful not to fall into the error of spiritualizing this and other prophetic texts and assuming that somehow Israel really means the Church. Israel means Israel.

For example, all through Revelation we see an emphasis on historic Israel, ethnic Israel. You will recall the sealing of the 144,000 male Israelites to be his evangelistic force. They are called the servants of God in Revelation seven, and clearly they are distinguished from all the other nations as we read about in that text. Even the tribes of Israel are delineated in chapter seven. And now here in chapter 11 we are going to see a distinction between those who worship in the temple and the Gentiles who will tread under foot the holy city. John is commanded to measure the temple and altar and those who worship in it and we will understand that that is basically symbolizing his special preservation and protection of Israel. The imagery of this judgment that we see in Revelation is undeniably associated with historic ethnic Israel. We see judgment emanating from the ark of his covenant that appeared in his temple in verse 19. Later in chapter 15 and verse five we will see seven angels, the seven angels with the final seven bowl judgments, and that will come out of the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven which is another name for the holy of holies in the temple.

² Daniel 9:24.

³ Ibid.

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And when the final bowl is emptied in chapter 16 and verse 17, we read that a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne saying, "It is done."⁴ In Revelation 11 where we are out at today, there are two Jewish witnesses in verse three that will verify the veracity of the Lord's testimony. And even the plagues that he sends upon the earth are reminiscent of the ones that God poured out upon the enemies of Israel through the agency of Moses and Elijah. The "woman" later on in chapter 12 is clearly identified as being historical Israel in verse five of that chapter, the whole chapter being devoted to the persecution that she must endure as the special object of Satan and the beast, of their wrath, and yet we see the Lord miraculously preserving and protecting her. And in the very closing scene we see the clash in heaven where Michael the archangel, Michael who is the ancient protector of Israel according to Daniel 12:1 defeats Satan. So, dear friends, be very careful in spiritualizing these things. It requires some serious exegetical gymnastics to deny that this is speaking of ethnic Israel, not the Church.

Now in Revelation 11 the Lord is going to introduce two faithful witnesses who will warn the world of the final outpouring of his wrath and the horrors of hell that will be the destiny of all who refuse to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. But before they are introduced, John continues to participate in this remarkable drama that began in chapter 10 and ends through verse 14 of chapter 11. And this morning we are going to examine the first of two themes in verses one and two, namely *the measuring of the temple*. And next week we will look at the two witnesses.

Now, I have broken this down into three categories that I hope will be helpful to you as we endeavor to understand these truths. We will look, first, at *the inner measurement*; secondly, *the outer abandonment*; and finally, *the time of defilement*.

Let me give you some further context before we look at this text. According to Daniel chapter nine verses 24 and 27 the antichrist will allow the Jews to construct another temple during the time of the tribulation. And they will even reinstitute the sacrificial system largely in unbelief, not understanding who Christ is. And, of course, they will have to do this on the sight that is currently occupied by the Muslims, the Dome of the Rock.

Paul prophesied in 2 Thessalonians two verses three and four that the man of lawlessness will be revealed. He said that, "The son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."⁵ And, of course, this is a reference to the antichrist. Now obviously this prophecy requires a future literal temple being built in Jerusalem. We know that many Jews right now are preparing to do that to the great consternation of the Palestinians and the rest of the Islamic and Arab world. But by this time as we come to this text this morning, by this time during the tribulation the Islamic world will be a toothless tiger, unable to resist Israel.

⁴ See Revelation 16:17.

⁵ 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

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May I remind you a bit of why I would say this? According to the prophecies of Ezekiel in chapter 38 and 39, an alliance of nations will descend upon Israel under the leadership of Gog and Magog and they will be supernaturally defeated on the mountains of Israel. And as we look at that list in Ezekiel chapter 38 we can see who those countries will be and they are, by and large, Islamic countries today. (There are a lot of details that I go into in the exposition that I did on the first seal if you want to know more about that particular issue). But this victory will demonstrate to the world that God has a special interest in protecting Israel, and it will also reenergize many Jews to return to Israel. I know of several who are living here in the United States today who are packing up and moving to Israel. They are going back to their country largely in unbelief, but at this time even more of them will return. And this will also cause the secular Jews to return who up until this time really have no concern whatsoever about rebuilding a temple. All they are concerned about is just everybody kind of having a big party and let's just all get along.

But with the Islamic world out of the way, having been defeated, and with such a dramatic testimony of what God has done in protecting Israel, they will be willing to join in with the orthodox Jews who say, "You better build that temple." And with most of the Muslim world defeated they will not be able to stop the Jews from building that temple.

Now I believe that the rapture of the Church will have happened just prior to this. That will send the whole world into chaos, especially the United States, and now after *that* battle, while Israel is burying the millions of corpses of those soldiers who came upon them, in fact, Ezekiel tells us that it will take them seven months to bury the dead and it will take them seven years just to burn the weaponry, during that time there will be, shall we say, the perfect storm for the first seal to be unleashed upon the world which will be the rise of the antichrist who will offer a false peace to the world. The perfect time for the world to come together and follow a charismatic leader that will promise them the world.

Daniel seven verses 23 through 24 describes that time where a one world government will dominate the world which will eventually splinter into 10 governments, a new world alliance, far more powerful than NATO or the United Nations. In fact, it describes a 10 nation confederacy that will thrive during the first part of the tribulation under the leadership of the antichrist. And as we study the prophetic word we can see that he will unite the rest of the world, primarily the Europeans, in an alliance with Israel and give them a covenant of protection and a covenant of commerce and peace. This will be, shall we say, the new world order that everyone is looking for, but it will be a ruse because the goal of the antichrist will be genocide, it will be to destroy the Jews and establish himself as God as we read in Daniel 9:27. But, dear friends, his subterfuge will be exposed in the middle of the week, in other words, in the middle of the tribulation when he desecrates the temple and when he goes into the holy of holies and erects an idol calling people to worship him.

Now we come to Revelation. This is all introduction. Now we come to Revelation and John is asked to measure this temple that the Jews have built. So first we want to look at

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the inner measurement and then *the outer measurement* and then finally *the actual time of defilement*. Let me read these two verses two you that we will examine this morning.

And there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months."⁶

John is given "a measuring rod," a *kalamos* (kal'-am-os) in Greek, and that is a hollow reed basically that grew between about 15 and 20 feet high there in the Jordan valley. It grows there to this day and it was used often as a measuring device.

We know that an angel uses the same kind of rod to measure the millennial temple that we see in Ezekiel's vision in Ezekiel chapter 40, and, of course, that will be the temple that the Lord himself will build. And we see here that John is told to rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship in it. The temple here, the *naos* (nah-os') in Greek, refers to the inner court of the temple, the inner sanctum, the holy of holies and the holy place around it. It is not referring to the overall complex of the temple. And, of course, this was the place where the brazen altar stood adjacent to the holy of holies, and they will certainly build it in the same way and they will furnish it in the same way. This is the place where the priest served. They even had a division there for the male Israelites as well as a division for the women. And he is told here to rise and measure.

Now this is a curious statement. I wonder what God is up to here. Well, the way you interpret the Bible is by using the Bible, and so we can see in other passages of the Word of God, for example, in the Old Testament we see how God measures things or marks things out for divine judgment. Or at times he will mark things out or measure things off, if you will, to demonstrate his ownership or his protection, as we see in Zechariah 2:1-5 where he measured off Jerusalem to protect them.

Now in this text it would indicate, through context, that he is measuring them off to protect them. Notice that there is no mention of actual physical dimensions. And because there is a clear distinction here between defining the parameters of what exists within the temple versus the outer court of the temple, combined with the command here to measure the worshippers, I believe that it is safe to assume that God is symbolically establishing his ownership of what he possesses, combined with assessing the purity and fidelity of the worshippers.

Now this is great news for John. Remember he is languishing on the Isle of Patmos in a Roman penal colony. He is doing hard labor. He is an old man in his 90s and he looks around and he is longing for the Messiah, the Lord to return, and he sees that Israel has been absolutely devastated. The Romans had come in AD 70 and the time he is writing this is about AD 96. They have come in and killed over a million people. There were

⁶ Revelation 11:1-2.

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almost 1000 cities in Israel that the Romans utterly devastated. And so to think now about that the Messiah! He can't come without a temple! What is going to happen here? Well, can you imagine the good news that this must have been to John to see that oh, God is asking me to measure something? I am seeing it here in the vision. Now the glorious temple that John was intimately aware of was nothing but a pile of rocks. Supposedly the most glorious building of that day, it is gone. But now he sees God measuring off his people, the ones whom he will protect and preserve.

So here I want you to understand that God is claiming ownership of the temple and of the altar and measuring the worshippers who would be his covenant people Israel, establishing the fact, certainly that their worship is not measuring up. Nevertheless he is marking them off as a special object of his divine favor to be protected during the final three and a half years of judgment of his wrath and ultimately to be reconciled to himself.

Now this is in contrast to the Gentiles who are in the outer court who oppose him as well as Israel, as well as the Christians of that day, those who make a mockery of the temple and certainly they will in that day as we well make a mockery of the holy city.

This leads us to our second division here of this text and that is the outer abandonment, the outer abandonment. Verse two says, "And leave out the court which is outside the temple."⁷ Now as we study the temple and certainly the one that will be erected in that day, there would be an outer court where the Gentiles could come, and this outer court was separated by a wall from the inner courtyard. In fact, the Gentiles were historically never allowed to come into the inner part because they would defile the temple. The Romans actually allowed the Jews to execute any violators of this prohibition.

So here we see a clear distinction between the godly remnant of Jews within versus the ungodly Gentiles without. And notice what he says here. "Leave out the court which is outside the temple."⁸ "Leave out" (*ekbale exothen* in Greek) and it literally means "to cast outside." It means "abandon." "Abandon that court. These people do not belong to me." That is the idea. In fact, in the New Testament the Greek verb *ekballo* (*ek-bal'-lo*), "I cast out," speaks of rejection or removal from divine favor. So to be measured is to be protected and to be in God's favor. To be unmeasured is to be forsaken, to be abandoned. So, again, this is the opposite of being measured.

Now I want to remind you that there will be many Gentiles that come to a saving knowledge of Christ during the time of the tribulation. We read about that in chapter five and verse nine and chapter seven and verse nine. But the vast majority will continue as they are today, in absolute open rebellion to the gospel, to the one true God, and they will continue to be the oppressors of his people.

So God tells John to leave them out, "Do not measure them for my possession and my protection."⁹

⁷ Revelation 11:2.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ See Revelation 11:2.

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There is a fascinating footnote. According to Colossians three and verse 11 Paul says "there is no distinction between Greek and Jews, circumcised and uncircumcised." So I would ask you why the distinction here in Revelation 11? It seems odd. Likewise in Ephesians chapter two verses 14 through 16 we learn that Christ is our peace Paul says "who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall."¹⁰ So the question is: Why the distinction here between Jews and Gentiles. That seems to be a contradiction.

Well, beloved the answer is: because the Church has been translated into heaven. It is no longer here. It is no longer on the earth even as the Lord promised in Revelation 3:10 that, "I will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world to test those who dwell upon the earth."¹¹ Now, were the Church still on earth, the distinctions between Jew and Gentile would remain valid.

I want you to notice next that this outer court, he says, "has been given to the nations." In other words, the outer court has fallen into Gentile hands. And he says, "And they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months."¹² In other words, they are going to control and defile the temple and the holy city for 42 months, three and a half years.

Evidently the Jews will be allowed, after they build their temple, they will be allowed to worship in freedom, to worship as they please. But now by this time in the tribulation the antichrist has desecrated the temple, and because of the certain animosity that he will have towards Israel and especially the two witnesses that we read about later on here in Revelation 11, he is going to be absolutely furious with Israel and he will turn on them.

Jesus predicted that Jerusalem would be destroyed in Luke 21:20 and certainly it was in AD 70. But the armies that surrounded Jerusalem of that day were really a preview of the siege that would come just before the Lord returns. And we see the text we are in here in Revelation 11 kind of moving us towards that. The one we now see developing is under the rule of the antichrist. The world is under the rule of the antichrist and he is the one that is going to give siege to the city. That is why in Luke 21:20 Jesus went on to describe the holy city being under Gentile control when he said actually in verse 24, "They will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations."¹³ And then notice this. "And Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."¹⁴

What are the times of the Gentiles? Well, it began at the Babylonian captivity under Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC and it still exists to this day. But the Gentile domination, beloved, will end when the Lord returns and he judges the nations that have persecuted his people and defiled his holy city in fulfillment, frankly, to the promises he made to

¹⁰ See Ephesians 2:14-16.

¹¹ See Revelation 3:10.

¹² Revelation 11:2.

¹³ Luke 21:24.

¹⁴ Ibid.

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Abraham. You will recall in Genesis 12:3 God says, "And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse."¹⁵

I might add as a footnote, this is a frightening prospect for the United States given our current administration's campaign of apology and appeasement to the Muslim people as well as the subtle rejection he is taking in his policies towards Israel. Of course, you are not going to hear that much on the news here, but you read the news in Israel, you read the people there, you begin to see mounting opposition. You begin to see protests now against our president and against the United States calling him an anti-Semite and so forth. And when you see his policies you begin to understand why.

Now, while this promise has been true that "God is going to curse those that curse you and bless those that bless you," while this has been true historically for every nation that has mistreated Israel (and all you have to go through the annals of history and just see when this happened and what happened subsequent to those nations) although that has been true, their ultimate and their final judgment will not occur until the battle of Armageddon and that is what we are moving towards here in the text.

But, again, before this occurs, the antichrist will seek to destroy Israel. We know according to the prophetic word that he will be successful in killing two thirds of them, but one third will be spared and finally reconciled unto the Messiah, their king. That will be that time when according to Zechariah 12 and verse 10 he will pour out on the house of David on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over him like the weeping of a first born.¹⁶ That is literally a reference to the wailing that occurred in Egypt at the time of the Passover when the Egyptians saw the loss of their first born. In other words the pathos of their mourning when they recognize whom they have rejected for so long will be so deep and so severe and so excruciating that they will wail over their long rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The prophet goes on to say, "In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo."¹⁷ That, by the way, was the place where Israel mourned over the death of the righteous king Josiah, a place that is located just northwest of Jerusalem. But prior to this day, the most profound woes and judgments that Israel has ever experienced even in their long and sordid history must take place when the Gentiles oppress them like never before.

This leads us to the third and final category, *the time of the defilement*. Notice in verse two we read that, "They will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months."¹⁸ That's three and a half years, again, the second half of the tribulation.

¹⁵ Genesis 12:3.

¹⁶ See Zechariah 12:10.

¹⁷ Zechariah 12:11.

¹⁸ Revelation 11:2.

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Verse three tells us that this will be the same time period of the time as the ministry of the two witnesses who will prophecy for 1260 days, the same period of time. Moreover in chapter 13 in verse five God tells us about the blasphemous antichrist and his rule that will extend for 42 months, the same period of time. So this time of protection for the Jews as they endure the defilement and domination of the Gentiles will continue through the last half of the tribulation until the Lord returns as we read about in Revelation 19 and eventually defeat the antichrist and judges all the nations and finally establishes his kingdom.

I want you to understand something else that I believe is important here, especially for many of our listeners who have a different perspective of the prophetic word and believe that these things are really a reference to what happened in AD 70 and have nothing to do with the future. I would submit to you that this passage in verse two cannot refer to the Roman siege of Jerusalem for many reasons, but not the least of which is that that particular siege actually began around AD 65 and lasted approximately five years, far beyond the 42 months described here. Moreover the phrase, "They will tread underfoot" literally means "to trample on." It does not mean to totally destroy. And, of course, that is what happened in AD 70. But rather here what is described is a period of domination and defilement, not total annihilation. So for this reason and many others, I humbly reject this arbitrary hermeneutic where you use a literal historical hermeneutic sometimes and other times you say, "No, I think I will interpret this part of the verse with a figurative symbolic hermeneutic." So therefore you have people say, "Well, the temple really refers to the church. Oh, but the holy city, well, now that was literally the city of Jerusalem and in AD 70." Friends you can't have it both ways.

Now, I want you to remember again John's measuring of the temple symbolized the divine marking of that Jewish remnant that he would preserve during these final pre kingdom judgments as they endure the Gentile's hostilities.

In fact, in Zechariah chapter 13 beginning in verse eight we read:

"It will come about in all the land," Declares the LORD, "That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it. "And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"¹⁹

What an incredible message of hope. Zechariah describes this again in chapter 14 and the first five verses. Here is what he says:

Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be

¹⁹ Zechariah 13:8-9.

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cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!²⁰

And who are the holy ones? That's us. This is a reference to the Second Coming of Christ.

I tell you. There are so many things that thrill me about the prospects of the fruition of our salvation and certainly the most thrilling of all is seeing my Savior face to face. But I must confess that somewhere in that top 10 of thrills will be witnessing the glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ in conquering all those who have mocked him down through redemptive history.

May I give you some more context concerning this final three and a half years? Prior to this time and currently to this very day, Satan is accusing the saints. Revelation 12:10 says "before our God day and night." Many people think, well, Satan is in hell. No, he is not. Satan spends much of his time accusing us in heaven. Notwithstanding his allegations, his efforts will be futile because the precious blood of Christ has permanently cleansed us. Therefore it remains efficacious to this day. The Lord Jesus Christ perfectly satisfied the wrath of God. There is therefore now what? No condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,²¹ Romans 8:1.

But at the sounding of the seventh trumpet something very fascinating is going to happen as we will later understand. At that time Satan's rule of the world will be terminated and at that time he will be expelled from heaven by Michael the archangel. Again, remember now, Michael biblically is the divine protector of Israel. He is called Israel's "prince" in Daniel chapter 10 and verse 21 and chapter 12 verse one. And at that time when this happens, according to Revelation 12 and verse 12, all those in heaven will rejoice. And, of course, that is a reference not only to the angels, but primarily to the saints that are there, the bridal church. Remember, by this time now we will have already appeared before the judgment seat of Christ. We will have received our rewards consistent with 1 Corinthians three and 2 Corinthians 5:10 and so forth.

But upon his expulsion from heaven to earth, he will become utterly enraged. He will be apoplectic. He will be stroked out with fury. That is the idea. In fact, in Revelation 12 verse 12 it says that when this happens he will have great wrath. Why? The text goes on to say, "knowing that he has only a short time."

²⁰ Zechariah 14:1-5.

²¹ See Romans 8:1.

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See, he has only got three and a half year here. Three and a half years to advance his nefarious, diabolical plot to thwart the purposes of God of whom he has been jealous all of these years. At this time Satan will unleash his fury on the believers of the earth, especially the 144,000 Jewish evangelists as well as the remnant of Jews whom God has marked out for his possession.

Have you ever wondered why is there so much hatred for the Jews? Well, it is because Satan understands. He knows who they are and what God is up to.

A man by the name of Dr. Harry A MacArthur said this, and I quote, “In back of hatred of the Jews is Satan himself. If anything proves the existence of a personal devil, anti-Semitism does. Satan knows that Israel gave us the book he most despises, the book that foretells his undoing. Satan knows that a Jewish womb gave body to our Lord and Savior when he came into this world. Satan well knows that the precious blood that flowed for the sinners’ cleansing came from the wounds and the open side of a Jew. Satan knows that the scepter has not departed from Judah and that it is the lion of the tribe of Judah who will yet rule over all the earth,” end quote.

As we read earlier in Zechariah chapter 13 verses eight through nine there is much hatred for the Jews certainly during this time. Remember, that is the time when two thirds of the Jews will be killed, one third will be protected and ultimately reconciled to God. And it is interesting that Moses even described this in Deuteronomy 32:35. He called it “the day of their calamity.” And Jeremiah says in Jeremiah 30 and verse seven. “Alas! for that day is great, There is none like it; And it is the time of Jacob’s distress, But he will be saved from it.”²² Later on in verse eight Jeremiah says, “And it shall come about on that day,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘that I will break his yoke from off their neck, and will tear off their bonds; and strangers shall no longer make them their slaves.”²³

Beloved, this is that season of untold agony for Israel. This is the time in that final three and a half years when the antichrist will invade “the beautiful land” in Daniel 11:41. Determined to subdue the whole world, he will make his final move against Jerusalem and Israel in an effort to once and for all rid the world of the pesky Jew. And according to Daniel 11:45 we read that “he will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful holy mountain, yet he will come to his end and no one will help him.”

However, in Revelation 12 :6 we learn more about the outworkings of God’s measuring of the worshipers there in the temple that we studied this morning. There we read that then the woman—in other words during that time when the antichrist is pouring out his wrath right before the Lord returns, “Then the woman,”²⁴ who is Israel, “fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.”²⁵ The same amount of time.

²² Jeremiah 30:7.

²³ Jeremiah 30:8.

²⁴ Revelation 12:6.

²⁵ Ibid.

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Beloved, this will be a pogrom that exceeds all others. This will go far beyond the killing fields and the extermination camps that we have read about throughout Israel's history. This will go way beyond what the Romans did, and Hitler, of course, even exceeded that.

Daniel 12:1 provides further insight regarding the terrors of that day for Israel. Here is what the prophet tells us. "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise."²⁶ I love that. My kids know what it means, now my grand kids, when papa arises. It means I have had enough of it. And that is the point. "Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued."²⁷

By God's protective grace many Jews will have heeded or will, I should say, heed Jesus' warning that he gave in Matthew 24 to flee into the wilderness for protection. You will recall actually in Matthew 24 verse 15 Jesus said:

Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.²⁸

Again, after the antichrist desecrates the temple and Satan is cast down, persecution against Israel will be unimaginable. And yet how glorious to know that many will be saved during that time.

Dr. David Larsen says, and I quote, "Even now Christian organizations have established depositories of spiritual literature, Bible commentaries, scholarly and popular works which will be resources for this brilliant and resourceful people to make up lost time in getting hold of New Testament material. What will it be like to hear, quote, 'All hail the power of Jesus name' end quote, come for Yeshivas and synagogues?" end quote.

This will also be a season of unprecedented persecution for believer as we read about in Matthew 24 and later on in Revelation 13. But, dear friends, there is such enormous hope. It shines so brilliantly beyond the impending clouds of calamity and distress. Our sovereign God is working a plan and it includes the salvation of his Church as well as Israel his elect. Time of national resurrection and restoration is coming according to Ezekiel 37, a time of spiritual rebirth.

²⁶ Daniel 12:1.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Matthew 24:15-20.

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Remember when Paul was on trial for believing Christ and the resurrection in Acts 26? It is interesting. He defended himself before his accusers. In verse six here is what he said, "Now I am standing trial,"²⁹ catch this, "for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers; the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day."³⁰ What was the hope? The hope of the kingdom. Then he goes on to say, "Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead?"³¹

Beloved, at the close of these three and a half years, this hope will become a reality and in Daniel 12:2 we read that, "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt."³²

Can you imagine what it will be like in that day to see Jews joining with other new believers—and of course, they will all be new believers at that point. Can you imagine to see them come together and sing *Amazing Grace* together, to sing some of the great hymns that we sung this morning? Unbelievable. But it is going to happen. In fact, the prophet Hosea tells us in chapter six verse one of some of the words that will come from the hearts of the people who have endured his loving rebuke.

Here is what they will say:

Come, let us return to the LORD. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us. He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day, That we may live before Him. So let us know, let us press on to know the LORD. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; And He will come to us like the rain, Like the spring rain watering the earth.³³

Oh, dear friends, what a marvelous Savior we serve. And to think that redemption even awaits such a recalcitrant people as the people of Israel, as well as many other Gentiles from every tribe and tongue and nation. Aren't you thankful that he saved you and he saved me? What an incredible picture of his redeeming grace. How I long for that day, to see him face to face and to see him return in all of his glory.

Let's pray together.

Father, thank you for these exhilarating truths that give us not only an understanding of the basic things that will happen before you return, but, oh Lord, the remind us afresh of your mercy and your grace in our lives. What a joy it is to serve a holy and a loving and a merciful God who is sovereign over all things. Lord, thank you for these truths. Cause

²⁹ Acts 26:6.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Acts 26:8.

³² Daniel 12:2.

³³ Hosea 6:1-3.

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them to penetrate our hearts that we might bear much fruit because of them. Come quickly, Lord Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Transcript Explanation: Each transcript is a rough approximation of the message preached and may occasionally misstate certain portions of the sermon and even misspell certain words. It should in no way be considered an edited document ready for print. Moreover, as in any transcription of the spoken word, the full intention and passion of the speaker cannot be fully captured and will in no way reflect the same style of a written document.

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