

The New Temple & Two Witnesses

by Danny Bond

Danny Bond's sermon explores the significance of the new temple and the two witnesses in the context of God's sovereignty and prophetic fulfillment in Revelation.

Duration: 48:04

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:11, Zechariah 4:6, Romans 11:27, Galatians 3:24, Revelation 11:1-2, Revelation 11:4

Topics: "End Times", "Divine Judgment"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses a passage from the book of Revelation that describes a powerful event where believers are taken up to heaven. The preacher emphasizes the fear and awe that this event brings upon those who witness it. He also mentions an earthquake that occurs at the same time, resulting in the death of 7,000 people, possibly the royal guard of the Antichrist. The preacher then explains the significance of a measuring rod given to John in the vision, suggesting that it represents the measurement and judgment of the temple.

Transcript

In the end of chapter 10, God is very interactive with John at this point, as he's giving him the revelation, and he had him eat the little book in verse 10 of chapter 10 that was in the angel's hand. And he ate it up and it was in his mouth, sweet as honey, and when he had eaten it, it was bitter in his stomach. I said to you that that was the title deed to the earth.

The angel shows up standing on the earth and the sea, and he's huge, and he's holding the book in his hand, and then he shrinks down to John's size, shrinks the book down, and so John can eat it. Remember now, we are dealing with prophecy, we are dealing with vision, and God is fully able to make interactive visions that are real, and yet it's all supernatural. So the question comes up, how do you know that the book in the hand of the huge angel, who shrinks down to John's size and gives it to him, is the title deed to the earth? Because earlier in the book of Revelation, there was the hand that came out from the throne of God, and a voice came out that said, who is worthy to take the scroll and loose the seals? And we looked at that in detail, that that was the title deed to the earth.

The Lord God holds out his hand and he says, who is worthy to take the scroll and loose its seals? The scroll is the title deed to the earth, and inside of it is beyond just the title deed, is the means by which God will take the earth back into his possession out of the hands of Satan and evil men. Thus, you have the seal judgments, which give way to the trumpet judgments, which give way to the bold judgments, seals,

trumpets, and bowls. That's how he takes it back from Satan.

When God made man, put him in the garden, he gave him dominion over the earth, right? Man sinned, followed the devil, effectively gave the title deed to the earth over to the devil. But it was all delegated authority, because in the end, God almighty owns and rules everything he has created. So that when it's all said and done, he still owns it all.

What Adam did in the garden was he gave over the authority to rule to the devil, but he didn't give the title deed to the earth, to the devil, because God kept it. And so God gives it to Jesus Christ, when he alone can step forth and take it. And thus, when the angel comes in chapter 10 to set in motion the events which will now bring this all to a close, that book is that scroll.

And so when John eats it, it's not like it disappears. Oh, my gosh, Johnny, the title deed to the earth. God kept it all this time safe and sound.

John ate it. It's more like what happened was really it was a lot like what we're doing here. We are eating of partaking of the book of Revelation and all of these things.

And that's what happened when John ate the book. He partook of all the good and all the bitter. So are you with me? Does that make sense? Now, as we come to Revelation chapter 11, verses one through 13, we come to deal with these issues.

Then I was given a read like a measuring rod and the angel stood saying, rise and measure the temple of God, the altar and those who worship there. But leave out the court, which is outside the temple. Do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles and they will tread the holy city under foot.

Forty two months and I will give power to my two witnesses and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days clothed in sackcloth. These two witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. 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. These have the power to shut up heaven so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy and they have power over waters to turn them to blood and strike the earth with all plagues. This is different than anything we've seen so far.

Strike the earth with all plagues as often as they desire. These are powerful men of God. Verse seven.

When they finish their testimony, when they are done doing what God has asked them to do, the beast that is the Antichrist that ascends out of the bottomless pit. That's where he gets his power from. Demons will make war against them, overcome them and kill them.

And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. Sodom, a city, Egypt, a nation, both evil in the Bible. Spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt.

What city could this be? He tells us where also our Lord was crucified. How could God called Jerusalem, Sodom and Egypt? Because at this particular point in time, the Antichrist is going to have his headquarters right there. He's going to be in the temple all the time.

So you read a verse eight and they are killed by the Antichrist is there. Verse eight. Their dead bodies will lie in the street of Jerusalem.

And verse nine, then those from the people's tribes, tongues and nations will see their dead bodies three and a half days and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. Those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry and send gifts to one another because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. Verse 11.

Now, after three and a half days, the breath of God, the breath of life from God entered them and they stood on their feet and great fear fell on those who saw them. The giver of all life is able to give life when it is gone from the human body and great fear fell on all those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, come up here.

And so they ascended into heaven in a cloud and their enemies saw them go. And in the same hour, there was a great earthquake and a tenth of the city fell in the earthquake. Seven thousand people were killed and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.

Pretty heavy passage, wouldn't you say? Basically, there's two things here. There is the temple measured and there are the two witnesses. Let's talk about the temple being measured here.

It's one of the most interesting passages in the book. John, to begin with, is given a measuring rod, a reed, verse one. Then I was given, he says, a reed.

I just marvel at what it must have been like for John at that point in time in his life. Whatever bad has happened to him is now eclipsed by all that God is doing in his life along the way. So here he is on the island of Patmos and he's already eaten the little book and now he's given a reed.

It just gets better and better. So he's given a reed. And you say, well, what is a reed? A reed is a hollow bamboo like cane plant that grew in the Jordan Valley.

And it was very lightweight, very firm. And so they could they commonly used it. They would cut them certain length and had a certain rigidity to it.

So they would use them for walking sticks. Very lightweight, but very rigid. Also is because of its lightweight and rigidity, it was also commonly cut just right and used for making little pens to write with little ink pens like you dip in an inkwell.

Further and more commonly, perhaps, was that it was commonly cut and used as a measuring rod so that you find this exact thing in Ezekiel chapter 40, where there is a temple there that is measured, probably the temple that will be in the millennium. That is a whole study all by itself. Seems that way anyhow.

And so these measuring rods, these reeds that were made into measuring rods were usually about nine feet long. A rod was six cubits. Might as well discuss it for a moment because you run into cubit all over the Bible.

A cubit is about 17 to 18 inches. How do you come up with that length? It's from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. That's how long a cubit is.

Six of those put together makes nine feet. And so that would make up the length of the rod. So because they didn't have on their belt in those days, a nice silver square thing where you could pull it and yellow tape came out and you can measure things.

They would take this reed from down by the river and cut them and make a nice measuring yardstick, as we would call it, for lack of a better phrase. Now, John then is given a reed to measure this area of the temple. If you read the Bible long enough, you will begin to realize God is into measuring things.

Read numbers, you'll find out he's into numbering things. God is into measuring things in the Bible because everything that he does is exact and precise. For example, God measures out judgment in the Bible.

If it wasn't for that fact, when we read in this passage, as we just did, that seven thousand died in that hour, if it wasn't for the fact that he measures out judgment, more would have died. You understand? It's the mercy of God that causes him to measure out and limit judgment when it occurs. Judgment is God's strange work.

He doesn't like to do it. Saving souls and blessing people is what he loves to do because his name is love. So God measures out judgment in the Bible.

God also measures out his own possessions for preservation, for preservation. That is effectively what he has John doing here, measuring out the temple area, the altar and those who worship there. He is measuring out what is his to preserve it, to make sure that everything happens exactly, precisely the way that he wants it to happen.

The reason I point this out to you, for one thing, it's in the text, but the other reason is very important to me. And that is that we come to understand this measuring process that God uses and we will come to realize something very important. God has measured out your life as his possession.

He loves you and he knows every little detail about you. I thank God that he measures and protects what is his. His plan is precise.

It is exact. He measures with a divine exactness to guard what belongs to him for an appointed hour, month, day, week, moment. In other words, all of that is to say this, you can trust your life in the hands of your God.

I love what Ecclesiastes 3:11 says. He has made everything beautiful in its time. So God here has John measuring off this part of Israel for his own protective reasons.

In John's time, if you look at John and his own relationship with the Lord at this point in John's time, he'd seen so much desecration. He saw the desecration of the temple in Jerusalem by Titus Vespasian in 70 A.D. At that time, Israel had nine hundred and eighty five towns overrun by the Romans. That is tragic and sad and heartbreaking to behold.

So he's given a measuring rod. Now John measures out the area for the new temple that will be built. God is going to have the temple rebuilt in Jerusalem on the temple mount where it was when Jesus Christ walked on this earth.

So you read Revelation 11 one again. I was given a reed like a measuring rod. The angel stood saying, rise and measure the temple of God, the altar and those who worship there.

Pay close attention to this first to leave out the court, which is outside the temple. Do not measure it for it has been given to the Gentiles. They will tread the holy city underfoot for forty two months, three and a half

years.

Now, this temple that is being measured here will be already built and operational before the last three and a half years on earth. The Antichrist will help the people of Israel to rebuild their temple during the first three and a half years of the tribulation period, which is calm. He will be kind and benevolent and he will help them rebuild their temple.

And then sometime around right here, three and a half years into it, just pass it right there. He will turn on them, but first he will help them. So that's how the temple is going to come to be built in a very short, quick time with the aid of the Antichrist, who's going to be helping all kinds of people in the first three and a half years of this last seven year period on earth.

You might ask the question, why does God want them to rebuild the temple anyway? Why is this in his plan? Because he's a saving God. God wants them to rebuild the temple, to drive them back, to focus on the law. He gave them originally the law of Moses, which pointed straight to Jehovah God, and that pointed straight to Jesus Christ.

I have the Bible's word on it. Galatians 3, 24, Paul writes, and he says, therefore, the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. They are so far.

You see, since the time of the destruction of their temple and the scattering throughout the world, most Jews are not Orthodox. So when you talk about an Orthodox Jew that's concerned about the law of Moses, the study of the scripture, they are very far and few in between. So because they are so far from Moses and the law that pointed to Christ, God is going to allow them to rebuild the temple, to get back into the process of living out the law of Moses, doing all of the sacrifices and everything in the temple and the sacrifices.

All of it spoke of Jesus Christ. So it's to point them, get them back, focus on Jehovah God and point them toward Christ. Why? Because God is going to fulfill the promises he's made to Israel.

Hold your place here in Revelation and turn to Romans chapter 11, verse 26, because it's tied directly into what we're studying right now. And this is the time period where this will come to pass. Romans 11, 26, Paul has gone through the whole issue.

Romans 9, 10, 11, has God cast off Israel since they rejected their Messiah or will he work again with them in such a way as to bring them to Christ? And the answer is yes. And in Romans 11, 26, so all Israel will be saved. They will come wholesale to Christ through the witness of the hundred and forty four thousand.

As it is written, the deliverer will come out of Zion and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. That's Israel. Verse 27, for this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.

So there is the promise on the pages of Scripture. And this will come true. And the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem is critical to the logistical fulfillment of that promise right there in Romans 11.

Critical. Galatians 3, 24, again, the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. So you know what God's going to do? He's going to meet them on their own turf.

Let them rebuild it, let them get back in action, and that will prepare them that they might turn to the one true God in Jesus Christ. And the two witnesses are going to be involved in that because they're going to be right there alongside all of that action. Now, if you are thinking and if you've traveled to Israel or study these things, the immediate question comes up.

How can they rebuild their temple when on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem there is the Dome of the Rock shrine? Because the Dome of the Rock shrine is a Muslim holy place. In fact, they believe that Muhammad ascended from the rock that's inside of it back into heaven. So it's one of their great holy places on Earth.

So how are you going to do that? How do they rebuild the temple? Well, what is so fascinating? We read here, as John is told to measure Revelation 11 to leave out the court, which is outside the temple. Do not measure it. It has been given to what? The Gentiles, Revelation 11 to at the time of Jesus, it was 39 acres.

How big is that? Think of a field for sale around here that's 39 acres. That's pretty big, isn't it? The Dome of the Rock shrine takes up much of the temple area. However, there is 12 acres to the north of the Dome of the Rock and to the west of the 12 acres is the Dome of the Tablets and to the east is the eastern gate of Jerusalem, which was sealed up as the prophet foretold and will not be open again until Jesus Christ comes back.

Those, the eastern gate and the place where the Dome of the Tablets is, which was where the Ark of the Covenant sat inside of the Holy of Holies. They're right in line with each other and they look straight across the Mount of Olives. Now, here's where it gets really interesting.

You say, does anybody take this seriously? Oh, yes. There is in Jerusalem an institute called the Temple Institute and they take this, they're Orthodox Jews, and they take this so seriously. They've been very busy, very busy for a number of years.

In fact, I have some pictures to show you. They've been very busy. Here is the temple.

You see it there to the right. See how huge the Temple Mount is? There is the temple when there was no Dome of the Rock shrine. Whole empty space to the left, half there, court of the Gentiles at the time of Jesus.

Leave out the court of the Gentiles. Don't worry about it, God says, right? Well, that leaves the area over to the other side. So, at the time of Jesus, there was no Dome of the Rock and it would have looked like that.

In fact, you'd come in from the left as you look at the picture and they would use it as a shortcut. They would cut across the court of the Gentiles and they'd go down and out the eastern gate. This is an aerial shot of the Temple Mount today and that is the Dome of the Rock shrine.

Very interesting, inside of that there is this big rock and you can see it. By the way, this is the ridge on Mount Moriah. That rock is most likely inside of there where Abraham took Isaac to offer him to the Lord before the Lord stopped him.

Same, it's the ridge of Mount Moriah. So, just over the ridge a little ways further is Calvary. OK, go to the next one.

If you look at this, you see where the court of the Gentiles, the bottom half where it's empty? Leave out that area, it's for the Gentiles, God says. So, if you just don't build the court of the Gentiles, then you have room in the 12 acres north of it to go ahead and build a temple that will face west to east. Here we are on the Mount of Olives and we're looking down from the Mount of Olives and just down to the bottom right you see the sealed up golden gate, the eastern gate.

It's a bricked in. Straight ahead from that is a little tiny thing which you'll see in a minute which is the Dome of the Tablets and to your left then is the Dome of the Rock shrine. That's the Wall of Jerusalem around there.

Moving on, we're zooming in now. We've gone straight in and across and that's the little Dome of the Tablets I told you about. What is interesting is that that entire temple mount with the exception of the rock underneath the golden shrine, it's all hollow underneath.

39 acres of a platform built by Herod except right here under that little, looks like a gazebo, it's bedrock. Right there, inside of there is where the Ark of the Covenant stood inside the Holy of Holies and the Shekinah glory of God was manifest there. I'll tell you what, I have stood in there.

I just couldn't bear to put the picture with me in it at this point in time. But that is what you're looking at. Now you see the eastern gate, that rectangle down in front of the picture, that's the eastern gate sealed up until the time when Jesus Christ comes back.

Sealed up according to prophecy. Straight beyond it, now you see the little Dome of the Tablets back there. So if you rebuilt the temple and the Holy of Holies was right there and the Ark of the Covenant, which the rabbis believe they know where it is, some believe it's buried down underneath there.

If you rebuilt it, you could put it right there exactly as it was before and everything would be in place biblically. Go to the next one. As they go ahead and rebuild it, this is what it would look like inside.

Now the Temple Institute in Jerusalem is so serious about all of this, they have already built everything necessary. Let me show you. Temple Institute.

You see it on the window there? You know what that is right there? That is the first temple menorah since the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. That's real. It's made of solid gold and it's sitting in the Temple Institute in Jerusalem.

It goes right in that holy place we just saw in the last picture. There it is up close. That right there is what is used to clean the seven branch menorah.

It's already built too. The priest uses that to clean the different parts of the candelabra. Next one.

That is built, ready, waiting to hold the showbread. That's the table for the showbread in the new temple. Go to the next one.

That is the golden altar, the vents for the incense, which stands right in front of the veil. It's made, it's there. In fact, go to the next one.

There it is inside of a glass case. You have the different parts. That, remember when we were studying Revelation and the angel took the incense, the censer with the incense in it and he put fire in it and he swung it around and around and then he turned it loose and it went out and the judgment came on the

earth? That's a model of it right there.

And that's what they used to put the incense on the altar we just saw. Go to the next one. That's the laver.

You read about the laver in the Bible and you go, what in the world is a laver? And what the laver was is the priest when they would come to do their service, whether it be at dawn or in the evening or whatever, they would come and they would wash completely with the laver to be clean, to do their service. And then being a priest was hard, dirty, bloody work. So at the end of their time of service, they would wash off again.

The laver is already there. They have it, it's built, it's made. This is the silver shovel.

This is a real thing we're looking at. At dawn in the morning, the priest would come and shovel out the ashes from the altar of the burnt sacrifice. There it is, the shovel ready to go when they build it.

You know what this is? These are a silver knife and a bronze knife. These are sacrificial knives to use in the offerings that will be offered when they open the temple. They're there ready to go.

Next one. These are the lots they would cast in the great day of atonement for the scapegoat. One would be slain and the blood would be taken into the Holy of Holies and put on the mercy seat.

And the other, they would lay hands, the priest would lay hands on the high priest, would lay hands on the scapegoat, and then they would turn him loose to run into the wilderness. And he'd go way out there and they would shout back each one in turn that he was gone, they couldn't see him anymore until finally he was so far out there nobody could see him. And then they would give shout word back to the congregation of Israel and they'd all clap and cheer because all their sins were atoned for for the whole year.

It was a great day of rejoicing. The way they would choose which goat would do which thing was by casting these wooden lots and there they are ready to go when they start the operation. Next thing.

These are the trumpets they would blast before they would they would blow before they would do the burnt offerings. Next, they're built ready to go. You know what this is? Red heifer.

The ashes of the red heifer had to be mixed with a certain mixture and part of the offerings in order to be accepted by God. And throughout all these years has been a big mystery. How can even if we had everything else, we still couldn't do the offerings if we didn't have the ashes of a red heifer and we don't have a red heifer.

So how can we do it? It's been one of the most perplexing things. This is Melody. Melody is a red heifer born in the northern part of Israel.

Now the sad and tragic news is I just saw an update on the Internet that Melody's been disqualified. But there are other red heifers. There's a guy in Texas.

He's got a lot of them. He's sending over there. All of that is to say here is a red heifer.

They found one disqualified. If they find one little blemish, they can't use it. But there's red heifers they have found and they will be able to do that.

That's a whole study by itself to the whole red heifer thing, obviously. Go to the next one. These are for the drink offerings, libations, so on.

Go real quick now. That's for music in the temple. That's ready to go.

It's been made, crafted, temple heart. Next. That is what the average priest would wear.

That's average priest garment. That's sitting there waiting for a priest to put it on. They have them.

Next one. See, just like the one before. Next one.

This is amazing. We'll study this in the Old Testament on the high priest breastplate. He had 12 stones with the names of Israel on them.

So signifying that God always had his people on his heart. And so did the high priest. There they are.

They're ready and they will be. See the little holes around the edges. They will be woven through with thread that has to be made from spun gold to be woven into the breastplate.

It has to be made out of special thread and material and then put onto the ephod of the high priest on his chest. Well, there are the jewels. The next one.

There's the gold thread. The next one. There's the gold thread holding the stones on to the breastplate.

It's there. They've made it. Next one.

When the high priest would go into the Holy of Holies one time a year and on the Day of Atonement, he would have around the hem of his robe 70 bells in the shape of pomegranates. They would be jingling as he went in 70 of these around the bottom of the high priest robe. Well, there they are.

And the high priest wore those into the on the bottom of his robe, because when he went into the Holy of Holies one time of year into the presence of God, if he messed up even one tiny bit, he died. So, you would hear a jingling, a jingling, a jingling, a jingling. And if you heard silence, they had a rope tied around his ankle and they would reel him back out.

Nobody would go in there. And so, here they are. High priest, pomegranate-shaped bells for the priest's robe.

Next. Those are the stones of remembrance that would go on the shoulders of the ephod that would cover the high priest's chest and shoulders and back. They are ready to go.

Next. This is amazing. I have been hunting all over everywhere for all of these pictures, obviously.

And today, I'd already been to the Temple Institute site and today on the Temple Institute site on the Internet, it said breaking news. This is what was there today. 530.

I thought, thank you, Lord. This is the high priest's entire outfit. And this is from the back.

The next one is from the front. You see the breastplate? And the ephod is like a vest, but it's more than that. It goes up around the shoulders.

You see all that? Well, the late breaking news is they finally found everything they needed to make the ephod. They have everything else. And now, they're just figuring out how to assemble the stones of remembrance on the top shoulders there, as you see in the picture.

And then, I believe there's one last picture. There it is, right there. Artist's conception of a completed ephod.

So, it wraps around you, goes over your shoulders, and then you see the front view on the right with the breastplate attached. And what it said on their site is this. Late breaking news.

Having completed the breastplate for the next high priest of Israel, we are now pleased to announce that the initial stage of the weaving of the sacred ephod garment for the uniform of the high priest has been completed. The Temple Institute must now begin the complicated task of joining the ephod to the remembrance stones and affixing the completed breastplate. This is a complex project and will be based on the research the Institute has already completed.

We are hopeful this task will be completed soon so that the results can be made public in the near future. They have every single thing they need to go right into the sacrifices and everything else, the worship and the law of Moses, as soon as the Temple is built. Now, when I became a Christian, none of this existed.

When I went to Israel the first time, they had a few of these items. Today, they have everything. Tell me we are not in the last days.

Tell me we are not at the time where the Antichrist is going to come to power. These things will be fulfilled. Jesus Christ is coming back.

He is going to rapture his church exactly like the Bible says. And then, just as we have been studying the book of Revelation, all these things are going to occur. As John has measured the Temple, the next thing is the two witnesses.

The two witnesses are given this power to prophesy 1,260 days. They will rebuild the Temple. The one who helps them rebuild it is the Antichrist.

They recognize him as their Messiah. And so, they are going that direction. In the meantime, these two witnesses are raised up by the Lord and they are in Jerusalem.

Yes, they witness to the world. They have this incredible power. But, their main function is to be right there at the Temple to witness of the fulfilled law of Moses in Jesus Christ.

So, when the Antichrist turns on the Jewish people, they will be there interpreting all these things we have been learning. All the Old Testament prophecies, the book of Revelation, they will be there to witness to them of these things. The Greek term for witness is martyrs, from which we get our word in the English martyr.

That is because in the early church, so many Christians died for their witness for Jesus Christ that a witness for Christ in death became synonymous. Now, there is something about them that is distinctly mosaic. Now, we just looked at everything distinctly mosaic, right? God does everything strategic and specific and precise, right? So, these two men have something distinctly mosaic about them and one is in verse 3 of Revelation 11.

I will give power to my, what does it say? Two witnesses. That is distinctly mosaic right there. Deuteronomy 17.6, the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Deuteronomy 19.15, one witness will not rise up to indict someone, but by the mouth of two or three witnesses, the matter will be established. Matthew 18.16, Jesus Christ says, if he will not hear you, take one or two more that by the mouth, he quotes Deuteronomy, of two or three witnesses, every word will be established. It is distinctly mosaic.

Hebrews 10.28, he who has rejected the law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two witnesses or three. The whole two witness thing is distinctly mosaic and if you see that right up front, then it flows from there and it is not so mysterious. Their ministry takes place right alongside the new temple, right alongside the mosaic law being put back into effect.

As the Jews return to the practice of the law of Moses, these two witnesses come along witnessing to the fact that the law has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. As the Antichrist sets up the abomination of desolation and he says that he is God and he commands the Jews to worship him, they will then turn from him and they will rush effectively from the place, guess what, into the arms of the two witnesses. Who are basically Bible interpreting evangelists with tremendous power.

Their message is all the prophecies of the Old Testament fulfilled in Christ, the law of Moses fulfilled in Christ and they will be calling people to Christ. They are two human beings, they are very distinctly mosaic in their qualities about them, they are Bible interpreting evangelists and the time of their ministry is revealed to us here. It is the same time as you have everything going on that we have been discussing in verse 3 of Revelation 11.

Power to the two witnesses to prophesy 1260 days. It's the last three and a half years of the tribulation. These men are going to be preaching and evangelizing right along everything, everything that's happening in the new temple at the exact same time period, leading people to Jesus Christ.

And what is amazing is in Revelation 12, 6. Just look there real quick. Revelation 12, 6. During this same time, God is going to have many Jews sheltered in the wilderness. Revelation 12, 6. Then the woman, that's Israel, fled into the wilderness where she has a place prepared by God that they should feed her there.

How long? 1260 days. So God is going to be protecting a lot of his people for that period. Many think it's the rock city of Petra.

They're in the desert. We'll see more of that as we go on in Revelation. So here's their calling to witness alongside the temple in Jerusalem and to the world because it's a global village with satellite TV and everything else.

Their clothing is sackcloth because they are mourning sackcloth in the Bible. You run into it everywhere. It is a symbol of mourning, deep mourning, deep distress, deep grief, deep humility before God.

The reason you find it in the Bible is because the Bible, God uses it to paint a picture of pointed, stark, intense distress and grief. It comes off the pages of the Bible in one word, sackcloth. You find men like Jacob and David and King Jehoram and King Hezekiah and Job and Isaiah and Daniel and others wearing sackcloth when they're deeply grieving over sin and the rejection of God.

And that is why they are wearing it as an object lesson to the world. So you see their clothing, their identity is largely taken from Zechariah's vision in Zechariah chapter four. When you read in Revelation 11 for these are the two olive trees and they are the two lampstands that stand before God, the God of the earth.

Now, the reason that is important, it's the direct language of Zechariah chapter four, Zechariah four. Now, the angel who talked to me came with me and wakened me and the man who wake wakened out of his sleep. And he said to me, what do you see? I said, I'm looking.

There's a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it. Seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. This is a temple.

Zerubbabel's temple. Zechariah four, three, two olive trees are by it. One on the right hand of the bowl and one on the other.

So I answered, spoke to the angel, talked to me and said, what are these? My Lord, the angel talked to me, answered and said, don't you know? I said, no, my Lord. And he said, this is the word of the Lord to the to Zerubbabel. When it came time to take all the rubble and rebuild the temple, Zerubbabel's rebuilt temple.

This is what God says. You can't do it humanly speaking. So this is what God says.

Zechariah four, six. It's not going to be my might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord. So we quote that often and we don't have a clue about the context.

The context is the rebuilding of a temple with these two men of God involved as witnesses to the people that had denied the Lord their God. Very similar scenario, because God is very precise. You go on in chapter four, there are olive trees, the lampstands.

It's the same language. And you come to Revelation eleven four and you have two olive trees, two lampstands and the building of a temple. Same language, same scenario and very much mosaic.

Now, who are these guys? Well, their identity is drawn from their likeness to Old Testament prophets. They have the power to breathe fire, right? Who was the prophet in the Old Testament who could call down fire from heaven? Elijah. Second Kings one ten.

Elijah answered and said to the captain of the 50, if I am a man of God, that fire come down from heaven and consume you and your 50 men and fire came down from heaven and consumed him in his 50. So this guy sends another group to Elijah. So Elijah answered and said to them, if I'm a man of God, that fire come down from heaven and consume you and your 50 men and the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him in his 50.

Another guy comes. He says, look, I'm a family man. You know, I know you're a man of God.

I know you can call down fire. Can you just not do that this time? Can you just come with me? Elijah goes, OK, and he goes with him. So the point being, citing the reference there is that Elijah had that power.

Many scholars believe one of the witnesses will be Elijah. Why? Because he never died. Elijah went up in a fiery chariot, right? OK, well, then what about the other one? In John one twenty one, they asked John the Baptist and they said this.

Who are you? Are you Elijah? He said, I am not. Are you the prophet? Know who they meant by that? Moses to the Jews. Moses was everything.

And Elijah, are you Elijah? I am not. Are you that prophet? Are you Moses? No. Finally, they said, who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us.

What do you say about yourself? John replied in the words of Isaiah, the prophet. I am the voice of one calling in the desert. Make straight the way of the Lord.

Some of the Pharisees who had been sent questioned him and they said, then this. Watch this. Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Moses or Elijah in their brain? It was the Christ and Moses and Elijah.

They had the three together in their thinking in the time of John the Baptist. Now, we know Jesus Christ came, lived, died on the cross and rose again and went back to heaven. And we know that he's not one of the two witnesses.

But that leaves Moses, doesn't it? He said, well, wait, Moses died. Deuteronomy was his last sermon, a long one, a month. But it was his last sermon.

And then he went up into the mountain and God took him. Deuteronomy 34, 5 and 6. God supernaturally took Moses' body. And so it can't be Moses because Hebrews 9.27 says is appointed to men once to die and then the judgment.

So it can't be Moses. Really? Question. How many times did Lazarus die? Lazarus died.

He was dead for days. The old King James said when Jesus came, they said, by now he stinketh because he was decomposing. So Jesus brought him back to life.

Lazarus come forth. He had to call him by name because with that voice calling into the realm of the dead, everybody would have come out if he didn't use his name Lazarus. So he came out, he said, loose him, untie him.

But he's at dinner with Jesus and Bethany, you know, a few nights later. He died again after that. So you see, Moses may have died.

The devil tried to get his body from Michael, the archangel and Jew. It's nothing to God to bring a body back to life. We see even the two witnesses die on the streets of Jerusalem here, their death and they finish their testimony.

All the world sees it. They get so excited. They don't bury them.

They leave their bodies. Revelation, verse 9, three and a half days. So they're beginning to decompose and they're laying there.

They're getting gooey. They're starting to rot. They're giving gifts to one another.

It's beyond Christmas. They're more passionate than Christmas. Revelation, 11, 10.

Then those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, send gifts because these prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. Now, after three and a half days, the breath of God came into

them and they stood on their feet. Can you imagine the newscasters? They're covering this story.

We're here on the streets of Jerusalem. And as you can see, they're beginning to decompose. It's a time of making merry.

The atmosphere is charged with joy. I have never seen so many smiles on faces in my life. And then all of a sudden you see this.

Wait a minute. Hold it there. They're standing up and you can hear the newscaster.

And then they stand and they go, hey, what's up? We're done. And so are you. Goodbye.

And God calls from heaven and takes them in their own two-man rapture. And there's an earthquake, verse 13, in that same hour to punctuate the event with the hand of God. And a tenth of the city falls because God measures things out.

And the earthquake killed 7,000 people. You know who those 7,000 most likely are? They are most likely the royal guard of the Antichrist. Because at that point in time, he has set himself up in the temple as God.

You bet. His most trusted men are there and 7,000 are marked out to die in that earthquake. I can be dogmatic, but that's who I think they are.

Oh, my. God is amazing, isn't he? Christianity is exciting, isn't it? And there's never a dull moment when the divine life of God is in your soul by the free gift of Jesus Christ. Let's pray.

Father, thank you for this time. I pray that you would bring these things back to our minds and hearts, that we might meditate upon them and release your truth within our souls to strengthen us in every way. We thank you for the hope set before us in Jesus.

We know what's coming on this earth. And we know what's coming for us in heaven. Thank you, Jesus.

In your name we pray. Amen.

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