

# (Revelation) Revelation 7:1-10

by Zac Poonen

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*The Day of the Lord is a time of judgment and wrath, when God will pour out his wrath on the world, but the church will be raptured and the godly remnant in Israel will be protected.*

**Duration:** 1:01:34

**Topics:** "Gods Protection", "Final Judgment"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the protection of God's people and the coming judgment on the world. He mentions the sealing of the bond servants of God, emphasizing that God protects his people, even those who may initially doubt Jesus as the Messiah. The preacher highlights the role of pride as the root of all sins and the reason for the final judgment. He also references a New Testament passage in 1 Thessalonians 5, which describes the day of the Lord coming like a thief in the night. The sermon concludes with a reminder to learn from Jesus, who is gentle and humble in heart.

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## Transcript

Revelation chapter six and verse twelve, we were considering this at the close of our last study, the Lamb of God opening the seven-sealed book. And when it comes to the sixth seal, we find we have come into what the prophets called the day of the Lord, that is, the day that Jesus Christ returns in glory and the wrath of God is poured out upon a world consisting of sinners who have rejected his name, and before which the church is lifted up to meet him in the air. Verse twelve of Revelation six, I looked when he broke the seventh-sixth seal, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, the whole moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree cast its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind, and the sky was split apart like a scroll when it rolled up.

Every mountain and island were moved out of their places, the kings of the earth, the great men and the commanders, and the rich and the strong, and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. And they said to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." This is the first place in the book of Revelation where we find the word wrath of God coming, the wrath of the Lamb. Tribulation, which we saw earlier under the fifth seal in verse nine, ten, and eleven, is the wrath of man, instigated by Satan.

But judgment, as we see under the sixth seal, is the wrath of God, or the wrath of the Lamb. God has not promised to protect us from the wrath of man. He allows us to face it, and all through twenty centuries He

has allowed the Church to face tribulation.

But we have no place for the wrath of God, and that is the place where the Church will be taken up to meet the Lord in the air, when the wrath of God is manifested on this earth. But the great day, verse seventeen, of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand? Now we can look at a few verses in the Old Testament to see why this final judgment, called the Day of the Lord, comes upon this earth. And it's good for us to see this, because we know the reason why God judges.

First of all, Isaiah, chapter thirteen, verses six to eleven. Isaiah, chapter thirteen, verses six to eleven. "Wail, for the Day of the Lord is near.

It will come as a destruction from the Almighty. All hands will fall limp, every man's heart will melt, they will be terrified, pains and anguish will take hold of them, they will reap like a woman in labor.' Now this is a picture used in more than one place. That birth-fang of a woman in labor is a picture used for the Day of the Lord.

The Day of the Lord is coming. Verse ten, "The stars of heaven will not flash forth their light, the sun will be dark, and the moon will not shed its light.' Now notice verse eleven, "Thus,' the Lord says, 'I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity.' And this is the important thing I wanted you to notice. "I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud.' It's mainly because of the pride of man that this final judgment comes.

Pride is the root from which all the other things flower. "I will abase the haughtiness of the ruthless." Another verse, Isaiah chapter two and verse ten to twenty-one. Isaiah chapter two, verses ten to twenty-one, "Enter the rock and hide in the dust from the terror of the Lord and from the splendor of His majesty." Notice again in verse eleven, "The proud look of man will be abased, the loftiness of man will be humbled, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day, for the Lord of hosts will have a day of reckoning against everyone who is proud and lofty, against everyone who is lifted up that he may be abased." And then there's a description of the various ways in which people are proud.

Various pictures are used in verse thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen. And then verse sixteen again, "The pride of man will be humbled, and the loftiness of men will be abased." And then verse nineteen, "Men will go into the caves of the rocks,' and so on. Now again, notice, the emphasis again, this is again referring to the final day of the Lord, is on pride.

Man's pride and self-exaltation is going to be brought low. There are many other sins that man commits, but it is primarily the pride of man that is highlighted as the thing that God is going to judge in that final day, which is called the day of the Lord. Notice chapter three, verse ten and eleven, in the midst of this section on the day of the Lord, the word of God says, "Say to the righteous that it will go well with them.' But verse eleven, "Woe to the wicked, it will go badly with him." Then I want to turn you to another passage in the book of Zephaniah, that's towards the end of the Old Testament.

The book of Zephaniah, the fourth book from the end of the Old Testament, Zephaniah chapter one, verse fourteen, "Near is the great day of the Lord, near and coming very quickly." Listen, "The day of the Lord, in it the warrior cries out bitterly. And in that connection, he says in chapter two and verse three, "Seek the Lord, all you humble of the earth who have carried out his commandment. Seek righteousness, seek humility, then perhaps you will be hidden in the day of the Lord's anger.

Certainly, the humble will be hidden." Now I'm showing you these verses to point out that the Old Testament prophets prophesied about the coming day of the Lord, and they always said that it was going to come as a judgment on the proud. It was the humble who were going to escape. And if it's a question as to who is going to be raptured, there's no doubt in my mind about that at all.

It's those who have learned during the time before the Lord comes to humble themselves. Brothers and sisters, have we learned that lesson? They are the ones. Seek humility, it says, and you'll be hidden in the day of the Lord's anger.

Then chapter three, verses eleven to thirteen, "In that day you will feel no shame because of all your deeds by which you have rebelled against me." Listen to this, "For then I will remove from your midst your proud, exalting one." Verse twelve, "But I will leave among you a humble and lowly people, and they will take refuge in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel will do no wrong and tell no lies." Notice this phrase, the remnant of Israel. Humility is going to be the thing that God looks for in the church and also in the remnant of Israel.

And then he goes on to say, in verse seventeen, "The Lord your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy and rejoice over you with shouts of joy." This is a promise given to the humble. It's not anyone and everyone who can claim that and say, "The Lord my God is rejoicing over me.' It is for those who have heard and listened to that exhortation to humble themselves and to go down.

Now all those passages refer to the proud of the earth, and in this connection, if you look at Revelation six again, Revelation chapter six, we find a description of the type of people who are going to hide in the caves and the rocks of the mountains when Jesus comes in glory. Revelation chapter six, verse fifteen. Notice the type of people described.

Kings, these are the great people you see, the king, the great men, the commander, the rich, the strong, and the free man. Six great people and then one person is mentioned as a slave. It's the proud, exalting ones found among the kings and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the free men who are going to be humbled in that day.

And that is why it's very important for us in these days to learn from Jesus what he taught us to learn. "Learn from me,' he said, "'for I am gentle and humble in heart,' and it is for those he is coming." I want to turn you to a New Testament passage about the day of the Lord, and that's 1 Thessalonians five. 1 Thessalonians, chapter five, and verses one to six.

1 Thessalonians, chapter five, verses one to six. "Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

While they are saying, "Peace and safety,' then destruction will come upon them suddenly." And notice the same illustration again, "like birth fangs suddenly upon a woman who is carrying a baby, and they'll not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you like a thief. For you are all sons of light and sons of day.

We are not of night nor of darkness." Have we understood how to belong to the light? To belong to the light means that we learn from Jesus' humility, to seek each occasion that we have on earth to humble ourselves and to go down, instead of seeking to be great and big and to exalt ourselves over others.

Those are the ones who are going to be brought low. The Antichrist is going to be the head of all the people who are exalting themselves, and Jesus is going to be the head of all those people who have humbled themselves, and he is coming for them.

To such people we can say, "You are not in darkness, that that day should come upon you like a thief." It shouldn't come on you as a surprise, because you're ready for it. You're ready for the Lord to come any moment, because you have learned the way of humbling yourself, the new and living way that Jesus opened up for us. Now we come to Revelation chapter 7. Revelation chapter 7, you see, it's important for us to see these passages that we have just looked at, to see the type of people whom the Lord is taking to himself before the wrath is poured out, before his wrath is poured out upon the world.

And in chapter 7, we find this phrase again, "After these things." We notice that in chapter 1, verse 19, as one of the divisions of the book of Revelation. We saw that in chapter 4, verse 1, as the beginning of a new section, "After these things." And in chapter 7, we find two verses beginning with this phrase, verse 1 and verse 9, "After these things, after these things." And the first section deals with Israel, as we see in verse 4. I heard the number of those who were sealed, 144,000 sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel. And the second section, from verse 9 to verse 17, deals with the church, which we read in verse 9, "From every tribe and tongue and people and nation of people standing before the Lamb." Now, having seen the broad outline of this chapter, we find that the godly remnant in Israel is protected during that time of wrath, but the church themselves, the church is raptured to stand before the Lord, because it says here they were standing, in verse 9, "before the throne and before the Lamb." So you see, when the wrath of God is poured out upon the earth, the church, those who are in Christ, the dead in Christ, will rise, and those who are living and in Christ will be taken up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and then we stand before the throne and before the Lamb, verse 9, but among the nation of Israel, there will be a godly remnant at that time who have not become Christians and therefore are not part of the church and therefore not raptured, but the Lord will protect them from His wrath.

Turn to Daniel, and I wanted to see one verse here before we turn to Daniel, and that's Revelation 7, verse 2, "I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, and he is the one who said, "Don't hurt,' verse 3, "the earth or sea or trees until we have sealed these bondservants of Israel,' bondservants of our God in Israel." And in this connection, we can turn to Daniel, chapter 12, and see who that angel is who is going to stand up for Israel in the last day, and that's Daniel, chapter 12, Daniel, chapter 12, verse 1 to 4, "Now at that time, Michael, the great prince or the archangel who stands over the sons of your people, will arise." There is a close connection in the Scriptures with Michael and the children of Israel. "He stands guard over the sons of your people. He will arise, and there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation on the face of the earth until that time." That is the time when the wrath of God is going to be poured out upon the earth.

It's going to be a time of terrific distress, and at that time, your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. That is, there are those in the nation of Israel, God-fearing people, who will be protected. And then here is a picture of what is going to happen to those who have trusted in Christ and those who have trusted in Old Testament times, looking forward to the coming of Christ in that day when Jesus comes.

Verse 2, "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground,' that is, those who have died, will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness

like the stars forever and ever." Now, when we come to this subject of Israel and what we read in Revelation 7, we saw there that there are one...Revelation 7.4, I heard the number of those who were sealed, 144,000 sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel. Now there are many people who feel that as far as God is concerned, His purpose for Israel is finished with the coming of Jesus Christ.

Now that's not true, as we read in Romans 11. I just want to show you a number of verses because it's important for us to see God's purpose for Israel if we are to be those who have understanding of the times in which we live. Romans 11, here Paul the Apostle is speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament after he has explained the gospel of salvation in the first eight chapters.

He then begins to deal with the nation of Israel in chapters 9, 10, and 11. This is New Testament teaching, not Old Testament teaching. In the New Testament, Paul says, I say then, God has not rejected His people Israel, has He? May it never be.

That's the same expression he uses in Romans 6, 1 and 2, shall we sin again? May it never be, impossible, shouldn't be. And same thing he uses here, God has not rejected His people Israel, but verse 5, just like in Elijah's day there was a remnant of 7,000, verse 2, 3, and 4, in verse 5, in the same way then there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice. And in the last days, when Jesus comes, there will be a remnant on the face of the earth in the nation of Israel, God-fearing people who have not understood that Jesus Christ is their Messiah, and therefore are not raptured.

If they had put their trust in Christ, they would have become a part of the church in which church there is no distinction between Jew or non-Jew. But yet they were God-fearing, and there is a remnant among God's people. Now I want you to see verse 15, concerning Israel.

He continues to say, if the rejection of Israel has resulted in the reconciliation of the world, that means the whole world has had the opportunity to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ when Israel was rejected, now, which is nearly 2,000 years later, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? When Israel is accepted again, back, the world is going to experience, the earth is going to experience something like a resurrection. The wild animals will become tame again, the thorns and thistles will disappear. And turn to verse 24, he's speaking about the Gentiles, the non-Jews.

If you were cut off from a wild olive tree, and you were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, that is into the chosen people of God, how much more shall these who are the natural branches, that is the Jews, be grafted into their own olive tree again? And verse 25, very important, I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery. The Holy Spirit says to us, brethren, sitting here this evening, I don't want you to be ignorant of this mystery. That's why we want to spend some time this evening considering Israel, because the Holy Spirit says to us, I don't want you to be ignorant of this mystery, lest you become wise in your own estimation, lest you think that you are a specially chosen people.

That a partial hardening has happened to Israel. Notice it is partial, and there is a time limit to it. When is this hardening going to be over? Until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Do you know what the word fullness of the Gentiles means? It means until every person whose name is written in the Lamb's book of life among the nations of the earth are gathered in. And when the last person whose name is written in the Lamb's book of life is gathered in, it will be time for the rapture and time for the hardening to go away from Israel. That's the meaning of this verse.

We are not to be ignorant of that. That's the nation of Israel. Verse 29, for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

That means He will not change. If He has called the nation of Israel once, He will never change His mind about it. Now I want you to turn to a very interesting phrase in Revelation chapter 6. Revelation chapter 6, verse 13.

We saw this phrase, the stars of the sky fell to the earth as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. Now this is referring to the stars of the earth falling, but the picture used is very interesting. The picture used is of a fig tree shaking off its rotten fig.

And then immediately after that, we read about Israel in chapter 7, verses 1 and 8. This is very interesting because the fig tree is a picture of Israel in the Bible. And the other thing I want you to notice is in chapter 7, verse 1, it says the four angels standing at the four corners of the earth. Now keep these two phrases in your mind, the fig tree and the four corners of the earth.

Now that's a poetic phrase. We know that the earth doesn't have four corners, but it means from the north, south, east and west, from all directions. The Lord has brought back to the nation of Israel, which was once known as Palestine, from the four corners of the earth, the Jews.

I want to show you a few verses in the Old Testament about this fig tree. First of all, in 1 Kings chapter 4 and verse 25, this is describing the rule of Solomon, king of Israel, who succeeded David. And in the Old Testament, the initial part of Solomon's rule, before he became an idolater and married heathen women, is a picture of the reign of Jesus Christ when he reigns on earth for a thousand years.

David is a picture of Jesus Christ when he came and overcame Goliath of Satan. And Solomon is a picture of Jesus Christ who is going to come and rule in peace. Solomon means peaceable.

And in Solomon's time, we read in 1 Kings 4 and verse 25, so Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. This is a phrase that comes a number of times in the Old Testament, Dan to Beersheba. Dan is in the north of Israel, Beersheba is in the south of Israel.

And if you look at a map of Israel today, you'll find that the nation of the Jews have occupied all that land from Dan to Beersheba. We are approaching the end when Jesus is going to establish his thousand year reign on earth. The thing I want you to notice here is that every man lived under his vine and his fig tree.

There were two pictures used of Israel in the Old Testament, a vine and a fig tree, a vine and a fig tree. When you come into the New Testament, we find in John chapter 15, Jesus said, I am the true vine, but he never said, I am the true fig tree. He said, I am the true vine and you are the branches.

As you abide in me, you'll bring forth fruit. We are now the true vine, the church, but the fig tree remains Israel. So we have the vine and the fig tree.

And in the millennium, when Jesus comes to rule on the earth, we find in Micah, Micah and the Old Testament, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Micah chapter four. And verses one to four, we read this. And it will come about in the last days that the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains.

And the Lord will be there. The word of the Lord will go forth from Jerusalem. The last part of verse two, verse three, he will judge between many peoples.

And in the millennium, this is and the last part of verse three, nation will not lift up sword against nation. Never again will they train for war. This is the 1000 year reign of Christ.

And then again, every one of them will sit under his vine and under his fig tree. That's a description of the millennium. Now, let me show you another verse in the book of Deuteronomy and chapter 32 and verse eight.

This is a very interesting thing that we need to understand particularly because it's relevant to the times in which we live. Deuteronomy chapter 32 and verse eight. When the most high, that is almighty God, gave the nations their inheritance.

Did you know that it's almighty God who has given to each country in the world their inheritance? Because the Lord says, all the earth is mine, the earth is the Lord and everything in it we read in 1 Corinthians 10. And because the earth is the Lord's, he has apportioned different parts of the earth to different countries. But it says here that when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the boundaries of all these nations.

But first of all, he set the boundary for the sons of Israel. And I can just give you these references if you would like to take them down. Genesis 15, verse 18.

The Lord told Abraham, Genesis 15, 18, I am going to give your descendants this land from the river of Egypt, which is near the Gaza Strip, up to the north to the river Euphrates, which is today in Syria. That is from the Gaza Strip to the river Euphrates was the land which God promised Abraham. And that was the land over which Solomon ruled when he was king of Israel.

And that is the land, dear friends, which will once again become Israel's possession when Jesus reigns on this earth. And we are beginning to see that. What we saw since the coming back of Israel on the 14th of May, 1948, when Israel declared itself to be a nation, we are beginning to see the beginning of the end.

Now, it was not just to Abraham that God gave this land, because I just want to fill you up a little bit on this, just in case we are ignorant. Abraham had a nephew called Lot. Lot's descendants are some of the Arabs.

Abraham had two sons and other sons that we read of in Genesis 23. And these sons, other than Isaac, have also been the heads of the Arabs, particularly Ishmael. Isaac, Abraham's son, had two sons, Esau and Jacob.

Esau is also one of the fathers of the Arabs. So to whom does this land which God promised Abraham belong, to the Arabs or to the Jews? Because Abraham is the father of both. Well, we've got to turn to Genesis chapter 35.

Genesis chapter 35 and verse 12. Here we read in verse 9, God appeared to Jacob and said to him in verse 10, Your name is Jacob, but your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name. And he called him Israel and he said to him, verse 12, The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you.

And to your descendants, after you I will give this land. Where does the land of Palestine belong and who should live there? The answer is given in these passages of Scripture. God owns the whole earth.

And whatever people may say, whatever the nations of the world may say, God has said, I have given this land to the descendants of Jacob. Genesis 35 verse 12 is very, very clear. I have given it to you and to your descendants after you.

He said to Jacob, and there is no doubt about that. Now, I want you to turn to the book of Joel chapter 1. We're going to look at the fig tree in relation to the nation of Israel. Joel chapter 1 and verse 12.

The vine dries up and the fig tree wastes away. That is the beginning of the decline of Israel, which was completed at the time of Jesus Christ. Joel chapter 2 verse 22.

Here is the opposite. After God has done a work, do not fear beasts of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness have turned green, the tree has borne its fruit, the fig tree and the vine have yielded in full. This vine, this fig tree that had wasted away, has started blossoming again.

I want to tell you something about these Old Testament promises. The Old Testament promises are all going to be literally fulfilled in the nation of Israel. That's why God has brought them back to the land which they were scattered from in the year 70 A.D. And they are going to be spiritually fulfilled in us in the church.

There are many promises in the Old Testament. We can apply every one of them to ourselves spiritually. But we must not forget, they will also be literally fulfilled in the nation of Israel before Jesus establishes His kingdom on earth.

Notice Joel chapter 2 verse 28. And it will come about after this, that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind, and your sons and daughters will prophesy. Notice this was originally given as a promise to Israel.

But on the day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter said, when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, he said, this is what Joel prophesied. It's fulfilled now. Your old men will dream dreams, and I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

In verse 30, I will display wonders in the sky. Verse 31, the sun will be turned into darkness, the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. How is that going to happen? It's all put together there.

Because it's going to be literally fulfilled in Israel at the time the day of the Lord is going to come. That's why it's put together there. What we read in Joel chapter 2 is going to be literally fulfilled in Israel one day.

Now we turn to the New Testament and look at the fig tree in the New Testament. Mark chapter 11, Mark chapter 11, verse 12 to 14. Here we read that Jesus departed from Bethany, and He became hungry.

Mark 11, verse 13. And at a distance He saw a fig tree in leaves, and He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it. And when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves.

It was not the season for figs. And He answered and said to it, May no one ever eat fruit from you again. And in verse 20 it says in the next morning they saw the fig tree withered up.

That was a prophecy. Jesus, we can read it like this in verse 13. Jesus came to the nation of Israel to see fruit for the glory of God.

He moved around in His ministry for three and a half years in that nation. And all He saw was the leaves of religious ritual. No fruit.

Just like a lot of Christendom today. But Israel then. And Jesus cursed it.

Israel was cursed. But notice, it did not wither away immediately. In fact it looked as though nothing happened.

And the next morning Peter saw it had dried up. What does this teach us? Jesus at the completion of His ministry walked out of the temple. And He says, Your house is left to you desolate.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, I wanted to call you but you did not know the time of your visitation. Henceforth you will not see Me until you say, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Israel was cursed.

But nothing happened for 40 years. Jesus Christ was crucified in the year 30 A.D. And the Jews cried out, His blood be on us and on our children. And God took them at their word.

And the fig tree did not dry up immediately. The next morning, 40 years later, in 70 A.D. The Roman army came in. And under General Titus, destroyed the temple.

And Israel was scattered. And even the Jewish historians who write today, who do not believe in Jesus Christ, have written, in 70 A.D. Our nation was scattered to the four ends of the earth. Then, for that's not the end of the fig tree.

Notice now Mark chapter 13. Mark chapter 13, where Jesus was talking about His second coming. And the disciples asked Jesus, Verse 4. When will these things be? What will be the sign? What will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled? And Jesus said about many things.

Verse 24. The sun will be darkened. The moon will not give its light.

And so on. That is at the end when the Son of Man is coming. But, verse 28.

Before all that happens, learn this parable from the fig tree. Notice the emphasis. Learn something.

Just like Jesus said, learn from Me to be gentle and humble in heart. He also said, learn about the fig tree. That's why it's important for the church to know about Israel.

What? This fig tree, which Jesus cursed, and which dried up the next morning. It says there, when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves all over again. You know that summer is near.

Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door. Truly, I say to you, this generation, which generation? This generation, which sees the fig tree budding again. That is your generation and mine.

Will not pass away until He who has years to hear. Let Him hear. You see the fig tree? It was cursed.

It dried up. And it's beginning to blossom again. The nation of Israel.

The fruit has not yet come. What does it say? It begins to put forth its leaves. The religious ritual.

They're not converted. No, there's no fruit for the glory of God in Israel today. But the leaves are there.

The fig tree is blossoming. You see, this is the meaning also of Luke chapter 13. Luke chapter 13 and verses 6 to 9. And Jesus said this parable about a man who had a fig tree.

And he came looking for fruit on it and he didn't find any. That's Israel. And he said, cut it down.

Why is it wasting the ground here? Why is it occupying this nation of Israel? And he answered, let it alone, sir. And let me try a little more time. And if it bears fruit next year, fine.

If not, cut it down. And it did not bear fruit and it was cut down. But it has started budding again.

Now, when it starts budding, we find that there is not everyone who is God-fearing. And there is a prophecy about that in Jeremiah 24. We are obeying Jesus' exhortation to learn from the fig tree.

Jeremiah 24 and verses 1 to 3. Here it says in the last part of verse 1, The Lord showed me two baskets of figs. Verse 2, one basket had good first ripe figs. And the other basket had very bad figs.

Which could not be eaten due to its rottenness. Good figs and bad figs. Remember what I told you at the beginning? The stars will fall like a fig tree casts out its rotten figs.

Today in Israel there are rotten figs. Most of them. They are figs all right, but rotten.

But there are also some good figs. Who will form part of that remnant of 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel that we read in Revelation 7. And one example of that we can see in John chapter 1. John's gospel chapter 1. And verse 47 and 48. You know Philip was one of the disciples of Jesus.

And it says in verse 45, Philip found Nathaniel and said we have found the Messiah. And Nathaniel said can any good thing come out of Nazareth? And Jesus saw Nathaniel verse 47. And said here is one of the remnants.

Here is an Israelite in whom there is no rottenness. He is a good fig. And Nathaniel said how do you know me? Jesus answered and said to him listen to this.

Before Philip called you when you were under the fig tree. It's amazing the word of God. He was a picture of that remnant.

That would make that fig tree blossom once again. And that's what we see. The 144,000 in Revelation chapter 7 from the sons of Israel.

They are all mixed up in the nation of Israel today. But God has his eye on them. And he is going to gather together a few.

They are not going to be many. But a few. I want to show you a few verses about the scattering of Israel and their regathering.

In Deuteronomy chapter 28 and verse 64. Deuteronomy chapter 28 and verse 64. We read the Lord will.

This is before they ever got into the land of Canaan. Moses told them something. He said I will tell you something that is going to happen in the last days.

Of your existence as a nation. The Lord will scatter you among all peoples from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth. Do you know when that happened? It happened only once in the history of Israel.

And that is in 70 A.D. Deuteronomy 28 verse 64 was fulfilled in 70 A.D. God gave Israel a period of 40 years of grace to test them. After they crucified Jesus. They did not repent.

He scattered them to all the corners of the earth. I just want to give you a brief description of the history of Israel. When God chose Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

He allowed them to go into the land of Egypt. And then brought them out of Egypt and brought them into the land of Canaan through Joshua. That was around 1500 years before Christ.

And then after Solomon died. Which is about 900 years before Christ. In the days of his son.

The nation of Israel was split into two. A southern kingdom called itself Judah. The northern kingdom called itself Israel.

730 years before Christ. The Assyrian nation came and captured Israel. And took them captive.

And Israel the northern kingdom ceased to exist. About 600 years before Christ. The nation of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar.

Came and captured the southern kingdom. And took them away captive. But God said through Jeremiah.

After 70 years in Babylon. You will come back into the land. And exactly after 70 years in Babylon.

They came back and built the temple. Which was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. They built it again in the days of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah.

But in all those times. Never was Israel scattered to all the nations of the earth. They went to Assyria.

They went to Babylon. And they came back. But here is a time when it says you will be scattered from one end of the earth to the other.

That's not referring to its captivity in Babylon. That's referring to the time in 70 AD. When they were scattered across the face of the earth.

But. It's not only a promise of scattering. Moses also said in Deuteronomy chapter 30.

And verse 3. Deuteronomy chapter 30 and verse 3. Then the Lord your God will restore you from captivity. And have compassion on you. And will gather you again.

From all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. If you are outcasts at the ends of the earth. From there the Lord your God will gather you.

And from there he will bring you back. And the Lord your God will bring you into the land which your father has possessed. And you shall possess it.

And he will prosper you. And multiply you more than your father. Now that is what is happening in our day.

The fig tree is beginning to blossom. Israel has been gathered back. From the four corners of the earth.

Another verse. Isaiah chapter 11. Isaiah chapter 11.

And verses 11 and 12. Then it will happen on that day. That the Lord will again recover the second time.

When was the first time? The first time was 70 years after they went into Babylon. The Lord brought them back. But here it is speaking about a second time.

You know when that began to happen? 1948. The remnant of his people who will remain from Assyria, Egypt, Panthras, Kush, Elam, Shemar and so on. And he will lift up a standard for the nations.

Will assemble the banished ones of Israel. Now this is connected with the millennium described in verses 6, 7 and 8. Where the wolf will dwell with the lamb. And the leopard will lie down with the kid.

And it says in verse 8. The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra. No more wild animals. That is when Jesus reigns on the earth.

But that's connected with Israel coming back to the land. That is why we can say that Jesus could not come to the earth. Until Israel had come back to the land.

And had occupied the city of Jerusalem. Which they occupied in 1967. That's why Jesus could not have come back in 180 or 280 or 300 or even 1800 or 1900 AD.

He could not come back until the earliest was 1967. When the city of Jerusalem came back into the land and of Israel. Then only can he establish this 1000 year reign on the earth.

I want to show you another passage in Ezekiel. Chapter 36. Ezekiel 36 and verse 24.

I will take you from the nations. Gather you from all the land. And bring you into your own land.

And I want to show you another passage in Jeremiah. Chapter 33 verse 23 to 26. Now this is very important for some people.

Jeremiah 33 verse 23 to 26. And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying. Have you not observed what these people have spoken saying.

The two families that is Judah and Israel which the Lord has chosen. He has rejected them. That's what many people are saying today.

Now God has chosen the church. He has rejected the Jews. Thus they despise my people.

No longer are they as a nation in their sight. But thus says the Lord. Listen to this.

Very important for us to see this. If my covenant for day and night does not stand. And the fixed patterns of the heaven and earth I have not established.

Then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant. Not taking from his descendants rulers over their descendants. In other words.

As long as there is day and night going on. We can be sure. That God has not rejected the nation of Israel.

That's pretty clear. Now the very interesting thing that we see in the history of the world is. That many people through the centuries have tried to get Israel back.

We read in the fourth century there was a Roman emperor called Julian. The apostate. Who said promise the Jews I will build the temple.

But every time they tried to build the temple some calamity took place. And they couldn't build the temple. You know why? God's time had not yet come.

In the 16th century 17th century there were at least three Jewish leaders. Who tried to bring Israel back into the land. They didn't succeed.

Why? God's time had not come. At the end of the 19th century there was a Jewish Christian. Who became the prime minister of Britain.

The greatest power in the world at that time called Disraeli. Benjamin Disraeli. He promised to get the Jews back into Palestine.

But just before he planned to do it. He got voted out as prime minister. It's amazing.

Till God's time comes nobody can do it. There was a man called Lord Balfour in England 1917. Who tried to bring the Jews back.

He didn't succeed. Finally you know how God brought the Jews back to Israel? Through Hitler. It's amazing God's ways.

The very man who Satan inspired to kill the Jews. You know where he succeeded in chasing them out? Back into the nation of Israel. It's amazing.

Let me show you a verse about Hitler in the word of God. Jeremiah 16 and verses 14 to 16. Therefore behold the days are coming says the Lord.

When it will no longer be said. As the Lord lives who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt. But it will be said as the Lord lives.

Who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north. North of Israel that's Germany and Russia. And from all the other countries.

But with particular reference to the north. Of Israel. Where he had banished them.

And how is he going to get them back? Verse 16. I'm going to send for many fishermen and they will fish for them. And afterwards I'll send for many hunters.

Here is the Nazis. They will hunt them from every mountain and every hill. And from the cliffs of the rocks.

And they're going to chase them out. And they're going to come back to the nation of Israel. That's why immediately at the end of the second world war.

You find in 1948. Israel established itself. As a nation.

I wanted to show you one more verse in this connection. In Isaiah 43. And verses 5 and 6. Isaiah 43 and verses 5 and 6. Do not fear for I am with you.

Says the Lord. I will bring your offspring from the east. That includes India.

There are many people from Cochin. Jews who have gone back to Israel. And I will gather you from the west.

That is from England and America. There's no problem connected with these people coming from the east and from the west. Notice what it says.

I will bring them. I will gather them. But there is a problem.

When it concerns those who are coming from the north. That is from Russia. Russia will not allow the Jews to emigrate.

But I will say to the north. Give them up. You see that's a special phrase.

He doesn't say I'll just gather them. I'll say to the north. You better give them up.

And the Jews have come back from Russia too. And I will say to the south. That is to the Islamic countries.

Who also refuse to let the Jews go. Do not hold them back. And it's an amazing story.

How from a land called Yemen. South of Israel. Every single Jew.

From that Muslim nation. Came back. 43,000 of them.

Back into the nation of Israel. In 1948. And following.

In the following years. It's an amazing fulfillment of prophecy. And the word of God says.

In the book of Amos. In the Old Testament. Chapter 9. That when the Lord plants them.

In the land of Israel. Amos 9.15 They will never again be rooted out from their lands. We can be sure of that.

That no matter who does what. Israel is going to be there. Forever.

In that land. And that's not with the help of. America or England.

It's the Lord himself. Who is going to do that. One more verse.

Which is very relevant to. The times in which we are living. In the book of Zechariah chapter 10.

And verse 10. Zechariah chapter 10 says. Verse 9. When I scatter them among the peoples.

They will remember me. And they with their children will live and come back. Verse 10.

I will bring them back from the land of Egypt. Gather them from Assyria. And where will they bring them? Not only into the land of Israel.

I will bring them also into the land of Lebanon. You see the word of God is tremendously up to date. And into the land of Gilead.

That hasn't taken place yet. Gilead is on the eastern side of the river Jordan. Which is presently Jordan.

And watch for the fulfillment of that. Until no room can be found for them. God is going to give back to the descendants of Jacob.

The land which he promised Jacob. Many centuries ago. You can't play the fool with God.

He's going to give it back to them. Now that's just sort of an introduction. So that we understand Revelation 7 a little better.

Now we come back to Revelation 7. It's not only for Revelation 7. But to understand many other things in the book of Revelation. You need to have this background. Which I have just given you from the Old Testament.

The amazing thing is. That in 20 centuries. The Jew did not get assimilated.

You understand the word assimilated? That's like food getting digested. You put a potato into your stomach. And after a few hours it's no longer a potato.

It got digested. But you put the Jew into all the nations of the earth. And he didn't get digested.

He remained a Jew. And after 19 centuries he's still a Jew. Something like Jonah.

The whale could not digest Jonah. And that was a picture of Israel. Scattered in the nations.

Jonah cast into the whale's belly. And the whale tried to digest him for 3 days. Didn't succeed.

And finally threw him back out onto the land. And the same way the nations are this big whale. That tried to digest the Jews for 2,000 years.

Didn't succeed. Finally they've been thrown back into the land like Jonah. With what purpose Jonah went out to preach to the world.

And in the last days. This remnant is going to proclaim the word of God to the nations. It's amazing those pictures in the Old Testament.

That are being fulfilled now in our day. It's the most interesting book in the world. The word of God.

Revelation chapter 7. And I saw the four angels. Standing in the four corners of the earth. Holding back the four winds of the earth.

Notice the four corners of the earth. From which Israel has come. And I saw another angel.

We saw this was Michael. Crying out with a loud voice to the four angels. Saying don't harm the earth or the sea or the trees.

Until we have sealed the bond servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of those who were sealed. 144,000.

Sealed. 12,000 from every tribe of the sons of Israel. They are mentioned down up to verse 8. Now the thing I want you to notice here is.

That God protects his people. This remnant of people like Nathaniel. Who did not initially think that Jesus was the Messiah.

But when he saw him. He believed. Like that.

There are going to be people like Nathaniel. In Israel. In the last days.

God fearing people. Who cannot believe that Jesus is the Messiah. Until they see him in glory.

But. They are going to be there. In the nation of Israel.

Towards the end time. It doesn't have to be a literal number. 144,000 could be a representative number.

They are going to be these people. Who are going to be God's witnesses. And in the midst of the persecution.

That's going to be let loose in those days. By the antichrist. Triggered off by Satan's wrath.

And the wrath of God that's going to fall upon the world at that time. These people are going to be protected. Just like in Egypt.

Where Pharaoh is a picture of the antichrist. Troubling Israel. Israel was protected.

When the plagues. God sent. Upon Egypt.

Fell upon Egypt. It didn't touch the Israelites. In the same way.

In Babylon. Where Nebuchadnezzar. Is a picture of the antichrist.

Who got this image. And got everybody to bow down to it. It will be like that in the last days.

There were three people. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Who are again a picture of Israel.

They were put into the fire. But the fire couldn't burn them. And so God is going to preserve this godly remnant.

It says. They are going to be sealed. And protected.

It's an amazing thing. That God can protect. People.

Where he chooses to. This is why like we read in Isaiah 3. Say to the righteous. It will go well with him.

To the humble. To the God fearing. It will go well with them.

And this is the time where we see in verse 9. After these things. This sealing of these people. I saw a great multitude.

This is the church. This is where you and I come in. Brothers and sisters.

That includes the Jews as well. Who are converted. Which no one could count from every nation, tribe, people, tongue.

Standing before the throne and before the lamb. Clothed in white robes and palm branches in their hands. Saying salvation is due to our God.

Our salvation is wholly due to our God. We are saved by grace. As it says in the last part of verse 14.

They have made their robes white. In the blood of the lamb. That is the time.

When the church. Is raptured up. To meet the Lord in the air.

I want to show you one more verse in closing. Before we continue our study next week. And that is in the song of Solomon.

Chapter 2. Where there is a word. Spoken by the bridegroom to the bride. Song of Solomon.

Chapter 2. Verse 13. Verse 10. My beloved responded and said to me.

This is Christ saying to the church. Arise my darling. My beautiful one.

Come along. Why? Verse 13. Verse 14.

The fig tree. Has ripened its figs. Arise my darling.

My beautiful one. And come along. Let me see your form.

Let me hear your voice. Verse 14. That call is going to come from the bridegroom.

To the bride. One of these days. Because the fig tree.

Has ripened its figs. It is amazing as we see these scriptures. Put together.

We see what is happening to Israel. And we see why Jesus told us to learn something from the fig tree. Because that is what makes us realize.

This call. Arise my darling and come. Is going to come from our bridegroom.

For the marriage. Of the Lamb. Is near.

Praise the Lord. That is the hope we have. Of the coming of the Lord.

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