

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Revelation: God's Revelation To His Servants Today On Events About To Occur

Part IV: "The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter": Events After The Rapture Of The Church

C. The Great Tribulation Period, Revelation 6:1-19:21

5. A Second View Of The Great Tribulation Guiding Us To Avoid Group Idolatry, Revelation 11:1-19:21

a. Avoiding Group Idolatry By **DEPENDENTLY FOLLOWING** The GOD Of SCRIPTURE

(Revelation 11:1-13)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

As we learned in last Sunday's message from Revelation 10:1-11, God claims we need His help to avoid compromise with group idolatry, a fact we can easily illustrate: while writing his 2012 book, Religious Trojan Horse to warn of such compromise, Brannon Howse himself told how he was considering resigning his membership in a Southern Baptist Church since he had learned that the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, a United Nations group, "must 'support and respect the principles of the Charter of the United Nations,'" and one of those principles is the "quest for world government," *Ibid.*, p. 436, what Revelation reveals the antichrist will head!

I was amazed to learn that a commission in America's largest evangelical denomination was a *United Nations* group, but it illustrates how we at the local level are often ignorant of such movements and **need God's guidance!**

Need: *We thus ask, "How does God expect us to function to avoid slipping into group apostasy and idolatry?!"*

- I. We learned in Rev. 10:1-11 that John was to prophesy a **SECOND TIME** through the Great Tribulation period to **INFORM US** believers **TODAY HOW NOT** to **COMPROMISE** with **GROUP IDOLATRY**.
- II. Rev. 11:1-2 begins that **SECOND** prophecy, describing the **FIRST HALF** of the Great Tribulation with the **PERSPECTIVE** of **GROUPS**, and it **INITIALLY FOCUSES** on the **JEWISH TEMPLE**:
 - A. In Rev. 11:1, John was told by God's angel (Rev. 1:1) to measure God's temple, signifying ownership (B. K. C., N. T., p. 955), and since John was a Jew and Jews head their own temple worship in the first half of the Great Tribulation (Dan. 9:27; B. K. C., O. T., p. 1365), Rev. 11:1-2 describes the **Jewish controlled temple** in the **first half** of the Great Tribulation when Israel has made a protection treaty with the antichrist, Daniel 9:27.
 - B. The Rev. 11:1-2 events occur for 42 months, thus for the first 3 1/2 years of the Daniel 9:27 Great Tribulation.
- III. However, Israel's temple worship at that time will be **SEVERELY COMPROMISED**, for the court right outside the sanctuary will be given to ungodly Gentiles, a **CAPITAL OFFENSE** under the Mosaic Law!
 - A. John is told to measure the **naon**, i. e., the building with the Holiest of Holies and Holy Place (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 861; Richard C. Trench, Syns. of the N. T., 1973, p. 10-11) and the **altar** of burnt offering in the court necessary for the "sacrifice and offering" of "the entire Levitical system" Israel will practice at that time (Dan. 9:27; *Ibid.*, B. K. C., O. T.), **BUT NOT** to measure the **COURT ITSELF JUST OUTSIDE** the **naon**, but to leave it for the Gentiles to trod for 3 1/2 years, a **CAPITAL OFFENSE** in Num. 1:51; 2:2; 3:5-10 NIV!
 - B. Also, the Rev. 11:2c "holy city" term points to Isaiah 48:2 where Jewish exiles falsely claim to be citizens of the "holy city" though staying in Babylon instead of returning as God wills (*Ibid.*, p. 1102), and to Isaiah 52:1b where ungodly Gentiles enter the "holy city," polluting it (E. J. Young, The Book of Isaiah (NIC), 1974, v. III, p. 325-326). **Israel will thus practice a false spirituality and compromise with the world in a capital offense.**
- IV. To understand **HOW** such an apostasy will **ARISE**, we **CLOSELY** study Revelation 11:1-2 (as follows):
 - A. Though the **angel** of **God** is the one who **uncharacteristically** called John to **commit** this **capital crime** of **allowing** the **temple court** to be **corrupted** (Rev. 11:1-2 with 1:1), this event recalls how **God Himself** in Amos 4:4-5 **SARCASTICALLY** called Israel to practice her apostate worship at Bethel (1 K. 12:26-30) and to come and multiply her sins at Gilgal **so as to show how WAYWARD she had become in her WORSHIP!**
 - B. Thus, **Revelation 11:1-2 shows HOW this evil compromise by Israel that is so repugnant to God will arise**:
 1. John is given the **abnormal** measuring rod of a "**ruler's staff**" (*hrabdos*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 740), so **Israel will assume her own versus God's Biblical authority re: the temple.**
 2. Second, the angel's call, "Arise" (*egeiro*, *Ibid.*, p. 213-214; U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 861) recalls the call of Neh. 2:17 in **Hebrew** for Israel's Jews to "Arise" ["Come" in the English translations] (*qum*, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1303; B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 877-879) to rebuild Jerusalem's city wall.
 3. Third, since that call to "Arise" and act in Neh. 2:17 NIV is made **for Israel to remove her "disgrace" before Gentiles**, Israel's **motivation** to **compromise** re: the temple court will be the desire to **diffuse strong "Babylon the Great" ecumenical, ridiculing opposition to her possessing a Biblical temple that is totally**

off-limits to the pagan world by ecumenically giving all ecumenical groups access to the sanctuary court! [Along with some others, Christendom's amillennialists, by the non-literal method of interpreting Bible prophecy, *deny* Israel has **any divine right** to a *future Biblically sanctified temple mount*, leading to anti-Semitism that will pressure Israel to make her apostate compromise regarding the temple court!]

4. Fourth, Israel will "count" her *worshippers* (Rev. 11:1d), **usurping God's ownership of Israel's people!**
- V. **God will COUNTER this ecumenical apostasy by the ministry of His Two Witnesses, Revelation 11:3-6:**
- A. During the 3 1/2 years of the corrupted temple and city (Rev. 11:2), God will raise up "two witnesses" for 1,260 days to testify against this apostasy, dressed in sackcloth to warn of sin and divine judgment, Rev. 11:3.
 - B. They are the "2 olive trees" and "2 candlesticks" who "stand before the God of the earth" (Rev. 11:4), referring to Israel's O. T. high priest, Joshua, and civil governor, Zerubbabel, who God used to finish the **upright** temple upon Israel's return to the land from Babylonian exile in Zechariah 4:1-14. These two witnesses in the Great Tribulation will thus likely be the then-Jewish high priest and the then-prime minister of Israel!
 - C. Their **message** will be what is highlighted in Zech. 4:6, that of "not by [human] might nor by [human] power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." ***Opposite Israel's independence of God and His Word that had led to her apostate compromise re: the temple, these witnesses will testify that the FUTURE Messianic temple will be HOLY, and that STARTING with its OUTER and INNER COURTS (Ezekiel 40:1-47), a temple set up not by man's power, but by God at Jesus' return versus Israel's then ecumenically compromised temple!***
 - D. This message will oppose the "Babylon the Great" Jerusalem temple ecumenical order, angering Jewish and Gentile ecumenists alike, so to protect these men during their 3 1/2-year ministry, God will give them power like Elijah (to make it rain or not rain) and like Moses (to perform various plagues) at will, and to destroy all who oppose them by slaying them with fire that proceeds from their mouths (akin to Elijah's 2 Kings 1:9-15 work), Rev. 11:5-6. Moses and Elijah are Israel's most famous O. T. prophets, and both appeared with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration to testify of His coming ascension to be enthroned in heaven (Luke 9:28-31 NIV; Acts 1:9; Dan. 7:13-14), so they will be fitting witnesses to the world ecumenical movement of that era.
 - E. However, the world's apostates will faithlessly view the power of these men as rising from themselves, not from God as they will testify, so God will **Himself** then **miraculously CLARIFY** their witness, Rev. 11:7-13:
 - 1. In the middle of the Great Tribulation, God will let the antichrist kill these witnesses, demonstrating that these men are weak in themselves, that their call for Israel to rely on God's power was true, Rev. 11:7.
 - 2. However, the apostate, ecumenical world in its darkness will not initially understand this, but rejoice over the death of these men, leaving their bodies to lie where they were slain in a Jerusalem street, Rev. 11:8-10. Jerusalem is thus here called "Sodom" as in Isaiah 1:10-17 where she has a false worship and "Egypt" as in Ezekiel 23:1-4, 11-30 where she has errant unions with the nations and adopts their gods, Rev. 11:8. Israel will thus have a 7-year treaty with the antichrist (Dan. 9:27) and be apostate.
 - 3. However, God will **demonstrate** that His two witnesses ministered in **HIS power ALONE** just like they had **testified**, and that by raising them from the dead 3 1/2 days after their deaths right where their bodies publicly lay and calling them to heaven to ascend in a cloud like Jesus after His rejection by Israel and His resurrection, Rev. 11:11-12. There will then be a great earthquake, causing a tenth of the city to fall and 7,000 of its inhabitants to die so that survivors will finally give glory to the God of heaven, Rev. 11:13!

Lesson: *By acting independently of God and His Word, Israel will go into ecumenical union with "Babylon the Great" and the antichrist, only to see God counter her efforts and see them in time backfire to her great harm.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) Then, to avoid compromise and hurt and instead be blessed, may we NOT function INDEPENDENTLY of God and His Word, but FOLLOW His lead!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

(1) Due to point "IV, B, 3" above that describes how the allegorical method of interpreting Scripture led to amillennialism that denies Israel's right to a completely sanctified temple mount, including temple and court, I see God **supporting** our *literal method of interpreting Bible prophecy* and its **resulting dispensational, premillennial, pretribulational** viewpoint that **counters errant anti-Semitism! We need to KEEP HOLDING to that stance!**

(2) Also, the point in "IV, A" above that God's angel was using *sarcasm* in his Rev. 11:1-2 commands to John, which point made this whole difficult chapter make sense to me, was **revealed** as we were **recently** reading Amos 4:4-5 in our **regular family devotions!** As we **followed** God's lead in our **regular daily lives, He revealed His truth!**

Upon trusting in Christ for salvation, then, may we follow God's lead in His literally understood Word!