***Rebuilding the Temple

RV145-01***

Please turn in your Bibles to Revelation 11:1-13. We now begin a new chapter. Our subject is "The Tribulation Temple." This is segment number one.

Following the divine judgment which was revealed under the sixth trumpet, there is now a parenthetical section inserted into the record before the seventh angel is commanded by God to sound his trumpet. When he does, a new series of plagues and judgments of God will descend upon the human race. This parenthesis actually began at Revelation 10:1 and it continues through Revelation 11:14. It does not advance the narrative of the book. What this parenthesis does is that it gives us additional background information on the conditions which will exist in the tribulation preceding the return of Christ, and preceding the final judgments which will be turned loose when the seventh trumpet is blown. Out of the seventh trumpet will come the final last weeks (probably), in a very short time near the end – the bowl judgments, which are catastrophic, destructive forces turned loose upon the earth.

Isn't it interesting that one of the forces about which God says, "I will turn loose so that mankind will realize its helplessness, and that I, the Creator God, am in charge," is that, "I'm going to turn loose earthquakes all over this earth?" We have, this past week, seen what an earthquake can do. We have had quite a few of them in recent weeks and recent months over various parts of the world. Again, I cannot help but wonder if that is not another piece in the mosaic picture, indicating to us the conditions that never have existed in the history of the human race before, but will exist immediately before the arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ at His Second Coming.

So, this parenthesis gives us vital information about that final period of human history before Christ returns to this earth – the seven-year tribulation era. John himself, at this point, is now viewing things from a position on earth. Up to now, he has been viewing this as an observer of things that have been taking place in heaven. Now, he has become, in effect, an actor in this whole drama.

This prophetic revelation, of course, is to be understood on the basic principle of hermeneutics (the basic principle of interpreting Scripture), which is: you read it, and you take it literally. You do not spiritualized it. You do not symbolize it just because what it says is so staggering that it's hard to imagine that these things can happen to the human race. So, be prepared, as we continue in this parenthesis, to understand that we are talking about literal, geographic locations; literal periods of time; literal human beings; literal catastrophes in nature; literal death; and, literal resurrection.

**The Bittersweet Word of God**

We have seen at the beginning of Revelation 10, a mighty angel came on the scene. He promised that there would be no further delays in establishing the millennial kingdom of Christ on this earth, which was promised to Israel in the Abrahamic covenant. The church body itself will assist Jesus Christ in this millennial kingdom by reigning with Him over the whole earth, which will be under the domination of the Jewish nation. John is told at this point to eat that which contains the revelations of God's final program. John says that he found the Word of God to be sweet in his mouth, as he ate it. This is, of course, a symbolic action. However, he found it bitter after he had eaten it. This is so true of Bible doctrine. It is God's truth, which to the positive hearer is sweet, but to the negative hearer is bitter. Those who are receptive to what God has to say find that very sweet. Those who don't like what God has to say find that a very bitter pill to swallow.

One of our men today was telling me that he was talking to some gentleman about the Word of God at work. Into the discussion came women as being pastors of churches, and standing in the pulpit in a mixed congregation, when the church is gathered for worship and instruction, and a woman is up there teaching. Our man pointed out that 1 Corinthians 14 forbids that. It forbids a woman in spiritual authority over men. This gentleman said referred to a woman who is an "elder" at her church, and she stands in the pulpit. So, he went to her and showed her that Scripture. Our man said, "How would you deal with that Scripture? You stand up in that pulpit; you look out there at men and women; and, you proceed to teach them the Word of God. You pound the pulpit, and you speak as God's authority." And this woman exploded. She said, "I don't believe that."

Unfortunately, we couldn't ask her, "Well, what does that teach?" That was the original question. And I notice that when people do not like what they hear from the Word of God, they do not say, "Oh, you've got that all wrong. This is what that Scripture means." Instead, they say, "Well, I just don't agree with that. It's like President Carter, the great Sunday school teacher, on one occasion, when this very subject was being discussed about the role of women within the body of Christ. He said, "I just don't agree with the apostle Paul's teaching on that subject." Well, what was he saying? He was saying, "I don't agree with what the Holy Spirit has recorded in the Bible, and I'm disappointed that God the Holy Spirit couldn't get that straight. I wish that He would have talked to me first." That's what President Carter was saying.

This shows a contempt for the Bible as the true and final authority in spiritual things. It is the Bible that contains the Revelation of God. When somebody hears something that he doesn't like, as this young woman did, she didn't explain it. What she didn't like was being faced with the fact that the Bible condemns what she does, and thereby condemns the group that she's associated with – that they would let her, as a woman, stand up, and be a spiritual leader in a mixed congregation (in a mixed ministry) to men and women.

John eats the book. He finds it sweet, but when it gets to his stomach, it turns sour. He finds it a bitter pill. The Bible reveals things which to us are sources of great joy. The Bible also reveal things to us about ourselves that make this very sad. In the positive person, the gospel will produce the sweet joy of eternal life. But in the negative person, that same gospel will produce the bitter sorrow of eternal death.

So, we can understand the symbol here. Those who eat the Word of God (that is, hear it), depending on how they respond to it, will find it sweet, and will find it as Paul says, "The fragrance of life to life." Or if they are negative, Paul says, "They'll find it the fragrance in having the stench of death unto death."

Now John is told that he will be given more revelation about the future of mankind during the tribulation era. This is so important to understand – that what we are reading in Revelation basically reveals what God is going to do in that seven-year period of Daniel's timetable of Jewish history, which has never been fulfilled. John is to speak further about those who will come under the condemnation and the judgment of God in the tribulation period.

**Eating the Word of God**

The eating of the Word of God is something that all we Christians are obliged to do. You are obliged to do it on a daily basis. You are certainly obliged to do it on the times when the local church gathers for instruction in the Word of God. I just hope that the people who are associated with this ministry, who didn't show up today, can someday stand before God and give some very significant, justifiable reasons why they denied themselves access to feeding upon the Word of God, in spite of the fact that the Lord Jesus says, "Men do not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

You have heard us many times refer to the grace system by which we learn spiritual things. It is the system which God provided for the humanity of His Son, Jesus Christ, which He field-tested in His life on this earth – a system of knowledge of doctrine, plus the power of the Holy Spirit to make it work in the life. We call that the HICEE technique of the pastor-teacher who delivers instruction to the people of God. Any Christian who does not sit under the HICEE-type of instruction is a Christian who is far afield from the Word of God. He is a slave dominated by his emotions, and does not understand how to preserve his life for eternity, so that he does not fritter away his opportunity for storing treasures in heaven, and those eternal rewards that are there. We cannot go in detail on the HICEE technique here.

**Usable Knowledge**

However, the result of this kind of authoritative teaching is that, under the filling of the Holy Spirit, you sit here, and you are instructed on a doctrine that you are able to then understand, and you have what the Bible calls "gnosis" knowledge. It's non-usable information. It's just up here in your head. But you respond to that with a positive volition of believing it, and God the Holy Spirit takes that information that's up in your head, and He puts it down into your human spirit. Now it becomes what the Bible calls "epignosis" knowledge. That is full knowledge, and now it's usable information.

With this kind of information in your human spirit, you are now able to have God the Holy Spirit bringing to your attention the things you need to know every moment of your life as you go about making the decisions pertinent to what you are doing with the days that God has given you. In this way, your mind, under the guidance of doctrine, will control your will and your emotions, and you won't be frittering away your life, nor will you be making a fool of yourself by being a slave of experience and emotions, as the Charismatics constantly do.

**The Spiritual Maturity Structure**

This divine viewpoint truth of doctrine is then applied to your life under your filling of the Holy Spirit, as the directive side of your mentality is informed by the Spirit of God Himself. The end result is that, over a period of time, you build a spiritual maturity structure in your soul, and you become a strong, mature Christian.

I'm tossing out words and information that you may not be able to relate to because you don't have the vocabulary. But I assure you that I have touched upon things that would take you many, many hours of listening to tapes in the Berean ministry library for you to get the perception of what God has provided for you in this system of power.

**A Measuring Rod**

In this parenthetical section, John becomes a participant in an unfolding drama. He's no longer just an observer. So Revelation 11:1 says, "And there was given to me a measuring rod." Somebody hands John something. He is the recipient. He does not proceed to take it. It is given to him. And what is given to him is a thing called a measuring rod. In the Greek Bible, that word looks like this: "kalmos." This refers to a reed which is found along the Jordan River. It is usually about ten feet in length. It is a very straight reed, so it acts as a ruler. It says that this is like a staff: "There was given to me a measuring rod like a staff" (like a straight stick). It has been marked off, and it is now to be used as a ruler.

This same word for "staff" is used in Revelation 2:27 to refer to the rod of iron with which Christ will rule this world. So, John is given this reed. It is to be used as a measuring instrument.

**Measure the Temple**

Ezekiel 40:3 refers to such a measuring instrument in connection with the millennial temple – the temple that will exists in the millennium, and Ezekiel is told to measure that. So, the point is that "measuring" means something. Revelation 11 is one of the hardest chapters to interpret in the Bible (in some respects). Some of it is not hard. Right here at the front, we are really in a difficult area to put together. But again, we fall back upon where these symbols are used elsewhere in the Bible, and the significance of those uses to give us a clue as to what he's talking about here. That's why I point out to you that, elsewhere in the Bible, this straight stick represents an authority – the rod of iron of Jesus Christ. This straight stick in Ezekiel's hand represents a measuring of the millennial temple for some reason.

So, John is given this measuring rod, and then someone (probably God) says, "Rise and measure the temple of God." John is told (and this is a command in the Greek language): "Get up, and I want you to measure something." And that's a command. And it's a word that simply means to take the dimension of something.

So, John is to use this measuring stick, to take the dimension of something. The act of measuring something, when it is used in the Bible (when things are measured elsewhere in the Bible), we find that it signifies evaluating that thing which is measured as your possession. Measuring is the work of a surveyor. You know what a surveyor does. He indicates what is the boundary lines of your ownership, and he indicates the procedure for the construction on the basis of the survey that has been laid out. That's the same picture that you have in the Bible. Measuring indicates evaluation of some kind.

In Zechariah 2, the surveyor is seen determining the extent of Jerusalem (God's city). Why is he measuring it? He's measuring it to determine the ownership of that city; the boundary lines; and, to determine something about the quality of that city.

In Ezekiel 40, the future millennial temple is surveyed so as to identify it as God's possession. In Revelation 21, you would find that the New Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven and becomes the new world capital in the millennium under Jesus Christ, which goes out incidentally into eternity, is also measured to determine the extent of God's new capital, and to establish possession. So, measuring something symbolizes identifying ownership, and the evaluation and the condition of that particular thing.

We may get a little bit of a picture of this from Lamentations 2:7-8 – the significance of measuring something in this way: "The Lord has rejected His altar. He has abandoned His sanctuary. He has delivered into the hands of the enemy the walls of her palaces. They have made a noise in the house of the Lord, as in the day of an appointed feast. The Lord determined to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion. He has stretched out a line (that is, a measuring line). He has not restrained his hand from destroying, and He has caused rampart and wall to lament. They have languished together."

So, here you see a future picture where God stretches out a measuring instrument to determine the area of His judgment. He is measuring the city of Jerusalem, which at this time has turned completely against the authority of God. They are on their way into Babylonian captivity, and God gives this symbolic picture of measuring off the city of Jerusalem to identify the area that He's about to destroy along with its temple, which is exactly what Nebuchadnezzar did.

In the Old Testament, when sometimes something is to be marked out for divine judgment and destruction, it is marked out by a measurement. I want to give you a few verses to illustrate what we mean when we say, "Yes, we have a tough time interpreting Revelation 11, but we have an action to take here such that we do have some reference elsewhere in the Bible, and you always interpret Scripture by Scripture.

So, in 2 Samuel 8:2, we have this concept of measuring something: "And he defeated Moab, and measured them with the line, making them lie down on the ground. And he measured two lines to put to death, and one full line to keep alive. And the Moabites became servants to David, bringing tribute." What this is saying is that he took these Moabites (these prisoners), and he had them lie down on the ground one next to another. Then he stretched out a line, and the line had marks on it. And it says, "For every two marks he put, whoever was within those two marks, they were put to death." Then they had one more mark, and those people were left alive.

Here's the picture. The enemy is lying on the ground. He has lined them all up. The measuring line is put in there. It has equidistant marks on it. He takes all of the men who are within the category of the first two marks are put to death. Those who fall within the next category are taken off into captivity to serve Israel.

So, here you have measuring to determine the extent of destruction. Again, this is to identify a decision (a judgment) of God, as well as a possession.

This same idea as illustrated in 2 Kings 21:13: "And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab. And I will wipe Jerusalem as one washes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down." He says, "I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria;" that is, Samaria, the enemy of Israel, will be used like a measuring instrument: "And the house of Ahab will be used like a plumb line up and down." All of these are measuring activities of a construction site. And God says, "And the result of this will be that I will identify Jerusalem, and I'm going to wipe it off the face of the earth like a woman would wipe a dish clean with a rag."

You may add to that Amos 7:7-9. This is also measuring to identify an area for judgment: "Thus he showed me, and behold, the Lord was standing by a vertical wall with a plumb line in the sand. And the Lord said to me, 'What do you see, Amos?' And I said, 'A plumb line.' Then the Lord said, 'Behold, I'm about to put a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel. I will spare them no longer. The high places of Israel will be desolated, and the sanctuaries of Israel laid waste. Then I shall rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword;" that is, the Northern Kingdom as well as the southern.

What is God saying? God is saying, "I'm holding up this string, and there's a weight on the bottom." When you hold up the string, and you put a weight on the bottom, it's called a plumb line. It will show you exactly what is vertical. That's a perfectly vertical line. If you have a wall, you're not sure whether it's leaning or whether it's straight, put a plumb line on it, and you'll see very soon whether it is vertical or not. In other words, God says, "Here's my standard of righteousness. This is the way people ought to be. And I am holding up this vertical plumb line, and I'm going to put it up against Israel. And the Jewish people are going to find that they're all askew. They're out of order. They're out of line. And that will judge them for condemnation. So, here you have measuring again to identify those upon whom judgment will come.

Now, John says, "There was given to me a measuring rod like a staff. And someone said, 'Rise and measure the temple of God.'" It's very important that you understand what Greek word is behind this word "temple." It is this word "naos." "The word "naos" means a shrine or a sanctuary to a deity. The pagans used this word for the place in which their idols resided. These were the shrines which were devoted to their idols. It is the very heart (the very innermost) area of their worship.

For example, in Acts 17:24, Paul says, "And God who made the world, and all things in it (he is speaking at the altar of to the unknown god in Athens – to the intellectuals), since He is the Lord of Heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples 'naos' made with hands." This is a special innermost dwelling place of the living God.

Notice Acts 19:24, where this is illustrated further: "For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the craftsman." Here is the uproar in Ephesus, when Paul heals the girl who could tell fortunes, and they were worshiping Diana of the Ephesians. They were making these little silver shrines. That's what this man did. The people would buy these; put them in their homes; and, they would worship the idols (gods) before those shrines. So, this is a very sacred thing.

John is told to measure some very sacred place. Among the Jews, the word that was used to refer to the temple proper; that is, to the place that constituted the two main sections: the holy place; and, the holy of holies – this is what was called the "naos." It was the innermost sanctuary – the most sacred place.

Only the Levitical priests could enter the "naos" part of the temple. They came there to perform their worship rituals. In Luke 1:9 and in Matthew 27:51, you have reference made to priests ministering in the temple, and it uses this word "naos." So, we know that they were ministering in the holy place. All of the priests could come into the holy place, but only the high priest could come into the holy of holies, and he could only come on the day of atonement, the Yom Kippur – the one day a year when he brought the animal blood, signifying the blood of Christ, in order to make atonement for the sins of the people for that past year.

The Lord Jesus Christ, since he was not from the tribe of Levi, never entered the holy place or the holy of holies. Only those of the tribe of Levi, and only those descended from Aaron, were authorized priests to enter this particular area – the "naos." So, we're talking about the most sacred part of the of the temple precinct that existed under Judaism. Jesus was not of the tribe of Levi. He was of the tribe of Judah. This is indicated to us in Hebrews 7:13-1: "For the one concerning whom these things are spoken (referring to Christ) belongs to another tribe from which no one has officiated at the altar;" that is, from the tribe of Judah. The tribe of Judah did not officiate as priests: "For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood."

There is another Greek word that as you should know. It's the word "hieron." This word refers to the whole temple precinct. This is the total area that is included in what is called "the temple." It's not only the innermost part of the sanctuary, but all the grounds and courts surrounding it.

This is used, for example, in John 2:14: "And He found in the temple (that is, Jesus) those who are selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers seated." You know this incident where Jesus found them carrying on business in the temple. If you did not know that that word is "hieron," you might think they were in in the holy place selling their animals, or in the holy of holies. Nothing like that is suggested. This word tells us that they were outside of this area and around it, but it was still considered the total temple area.

The word "naos," interestingly enough, is used in 1 Corinthians 3:16. And you'll be interested for yourself personally what that says. This is speaking to you Christians: "Do you not know that you are the 'naos' of God (the temple of God), and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" Isn't that significant? You are not only the general area that God the Holy Spirit associates with, but you are the innermost area of God's holy dwelling. You are the very innermost part of the temple of God today.

We have the same idea in 1 Corinthians 6:19, where we read, "Or do you not know that your body a 'naos' (a temple) of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

So, John is told to measure something specifically. He is told to measure the temple, and it is identified as the temple of *the* God, meaning God the Father. The temple in Jerusalem was ordained by God as the Jews' center of worship under Judaism. We do not have a central temple of worship in Christianity. In Judaism, the males had to go on three special feasts up to Jerusalem to worship God. That's the only place they could worship God – at this temple. And this temple on earth was patterned after one which is in heaven – after things that are characterized in heaven. They portray God's provision for receiving sinners into heaven.

The whole temple that is on earth reflected what God was doing in heaven to make it possible for sinners to live forever with Him. Therefore, Hebrews 8:4-5 says, "Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all (that is, Jesus, because He's from the wrong tribe), since there are those who offer the gifts according to the law, who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things." This is just as Moses was warned by God when he is about to erect the tabernacle. He says, "For see that you make all things according to the pattern which is shown you on the mountain." God specifically told Moses he must be careful to construct the tabernacle (and later the temple was built upon that same plan) just as he was instructed to do, because it had to be just so. It had to be just right because it reflected a temple in heaven.

Hebrews 9:23-24 add to that: "Therefore, it was necessary for the copies of things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands (a mere copy of the true one), but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Jesus actually went into that temple in Heaven, and He made that final presentation of sacrifice – the final Yom Kippur ceremony that covered now the sins of all mankind.

So, John is on the earth. The time period, remember, is in the middle of the tribulation, and he's viewing a rebuilt temple in the city of Jerusalem. There is no such temple in the city of Jerusalem today. But John is looking at something, in the middle of the tribulation, that is on this earth. Remember what I said when we started. We deal with the Bible in a literal way. It is talking about a literal temple on a literal earth at a literal place called Jerusalem.

**Three Temples in Israel's History**

Basically, there have been three temples in Israel's history. You know that the first one was Solomon's Temple. This was a magnificent building. It was made of very costly materials. And anybody who saw it was awed. And God's very presence, with His Shekinah glory dwelt within the holy of holies right on top of the mercy seat, which was on top of the Ark of the Covenant. In the year 586 B.C., the Babylonian conqueror Nebuchadnezzar destroyed that temple; carried away its valuable materials; and, tore down the walls of the city. 70 years later, God permitted the Jews to return to their city, and to rebuild the walls, and to rebuild the temple under a man called Zerubbabel. So, Zerubbabel's temple was the second one. It was built after the Jews returned from 70 years of Babylonian captivity. But over the centuries, this temple also suffered at the hands of invaders.

In 168 B.C., a Syrian king named Antiochus Epiphanes offered the most degrading and most serious blow against the second temple, when, having conquered the Jews and being in possession of the temple site, he walked into the temple site, and on the altar that stood outside, which was the brazen altar (the altar made of brass – the altar upon which all those animal sacrifices were made as a symbol on behalf of human sin to be covered by the blood of Christ, he sacrificed a pig. This which was the most insulting, desecrating thing you can imagine to a Jew – to have a pig slaughtered upon this altar. That was 168 B.C.

The Jews reconquered; cleansed that altar; and, rededicated it. Then a non-Jew, and Idumean named Herod, came to the throne over the Jews at the hands of the Romans, and Herod (in order for a variety of reasons, but certainly one of them to gain favor with the Jews, since he was an outsider) began reconstructing the temple of Zerubbabel. It was a total renovation. He began this in the year 20 B.C, and it continued until 64 A.D. This was 84 years of construction upon this temple. And at one point, after 46 years of construction, that is the point at which Jesus made the statement about tearing down the temple, referring to the temple of His body, and His rebuilding it (putting it back up) in three days.

John 2:19: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.'" Now, He is standing in the presence of the Jerusalem temple. And the Jews, therefore, said, "It took 46 years to build this temple. And will you raise it up in three days?" It had had 46 years of renovation, and it wasn't finished yet. But he was speaking of the temple of His body: "When, therefore, He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this, and they believed the Scriptures and the Word which Jesus had spoken." After His resurrection, the disciple said, "Oh, that's what he was talking about raising – the temple of His body as God's dwelling place, not the Herodian temple that they were so proud of.

Well, finally, in 64 A.D., this building was finished. And the records that we have of it are just awe-inspiring. It was made of white marble. It was a beautiful temple. It was dramatically expanded. The thing covered something like 26 acres, and it had a life of six years after that. In 70 A.D., Titus the Conqueror came from Rome, and finally broke through the defenses of the Jews, and completely destroyed this temple. When he went in there, it was at the peak of its beauty, and of its magnificence, and he just tore the thing down completely, and did exactly what Jesus said would happen – "Not one stone left upon another." It was completely destroyed.

**The Fourth Temple**

When John is writing this letter of the Revelation, remember that he's writing in the year 95 A.D. The last temple that was left in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. So, when he's talking about a temple in Jerusalem, he's not talking about that reconstructed Herodian Temple. He obviously is talking about a temple that is yet to come in the future. In his vision, he is shown a fourth future temple which is in existence during the tribulation era. This is going to be built before the middle of the seven-year tribulation era, and it will be built with the support of the antichrist. This is, as a matter of fact, the only reason they will be able to build it.

**The Antichrist**

When the antichrist comes on the scene, he will be very powerful over the nations of the world. His power base will be in Western Europe, probably the European confederacy of nations (the economic community). This is the one that says in 1993, it will be totally united with a Congress of its own (a parliament). It will have a single currency. There will be no borders. It will be like the United States of Europe. It will be the most powerful economic military bloc in the world. That's the area that's now coming together, of all things. Who would have ever thought such a thing could take place? And the antichrist is going to be in charge of that area. He is going to have an enormous amount of power. He will bear a great deal of clout. Therefore, he will be able to put the Arabs in their place. He will be able to bring about a control over the Arabs so that the Jews are free to build their temple, and to restore their ancient sacrifices and rituals.

Daniel 9:27 tells us that the antichrist will do this. We read, "And he (the antichrist – the man of sin) will make a firm covenant with the many (referring to the Jews) for one week (that is, for seven years)." But in the middle of the seven years, he'll put a stop to sacrifice and grain offerings: "And on the wing of abominations will come one who will make desolate even until a complete destruction – one that is decreed is poured out on the one who makes desolate." These are a little confusing statements. But what it is saying is that someone's going to come on the scene that is going to bring desolation to the Jewish order of worship one more time, and that an abomination will be produced by this man, this antichrist, and that abomination (we will find later in the Revelation) is placing his own image up in the holy of holies and saying, "I am your God." He will be the epitome of new age doctrine – of the deity of man. And they will then be forced to worship him or else to suffer martyrdom.

So, what we're what we are told here is that the temple rituals of the Mosaic Law are going to be re-instituted in the tribulation. John is commanded to measure the tribulation temple to determine its validity by God's standards, and to determine ownership. The tribulation temple worship of the Jews will be one which rejects the Messiah Jesus Christ, whom this temple was built in the first place to portray. It will, therefore, be a false worship.

The tribulation Jews, in unbelief, will continue to dismiss the death of Christ on the cross as meaningless, and His resurrection as a fraud. Jerusalem, with its temple worship, will be seen by God as a spiritually benighted and morally corrupt society such as Sodom and Gomorrah. Revelation 11:8 says that that temple is going to be like something out of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is not going to be an expression of God's work.

During the last three-and-a-half years, then, of the tribulation, the antichrist is going to turn against the Jews, and set up his own image in the tribulation temple so that he will be worshiped as God. 1 Thessalonians 2:3-4 give us that information – that this is what this man is going to do, who starts off as the buddy-buddy friend of the Jewish people, and the Jews, in their desperation to have a friend (where they don't even have the United States today for its friend) – someone who will give them protection. To do what? To put their temple back in operation.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 says, "Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come (that is, the period of the antichrist – the period of the tribulation) unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God." That is going to be so hard for the Jews to swallow. That's when they will realize that Hitler was a real sweet patootie, and that that suffering that they will have at the hands of the antichrist will be something that they could not imagine one human being could do to another human being. You may read Revelation 13:14-15, which describe that same situation.

The Jews are going to stubbornly reject the Savior Jesus Christ right to the very end. Only a small remnant of them are going to be born again, but they will not be reborn on a national scale until they see Jesus returning, and realize that their forefathers indeed crucified their true Messiah. Zachariah 12:10 tells us that, as well as Romans 11:26.

However, today the Jews are marked out. Jesus tried to warn them. They're marked out for the worst time that they have ever had in their history. And it will be at the hand of this man who originally befriends them, and then turns against them. Matthew 24:21-22 records Jesus' warning, where He says, "Concerning this time, in the middle of the tribulation, when the antichrist turns against them, after letting them restore their temple: "For then there will be a great tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved. For the sake of the elect, those days will be cut short. The destruction will be so terrible that God will have to shorten the days so that there is some human life left upon this earth.

They will have excluded Jesus Christ, as many churches do today. You know the picture in Revelation 3:20, where Jesus is knocking at the heart's door saying, "Let me in, Christian," and being shut out. Today the world does not view Jesus Christ as the God-man. The Jews do not view Jesus as the God-man, the Savior of mankind. They view Him as a benevolent character who is an example of compassion. The world discounts the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as a vicarious payment for the sins of the world. They do not view Him as the only way into eternal life in heaven.

**The Rebuilding of the Temple**

The latest issue of "Time" magazine has an article entitled with a question: "Time for a New Temple?" I want to read you this article in closing: "May it be thy will that the temple be speedily rebuilt in our days? That plea to God recited three times a day in Jewish prayers expresses a yearning that makes Jerusalem's temple mount potentially the most volatile 35 acres on earth. Though 19 centuries have passed since Roman troops obliterated Herod's gilded temple, the mount remains the object of intense Jewish reverence. But for the past 13 centuries, the same trapezoidal tract has also been Islam's holiest site after Mecca and Medina. Its Al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock honor the spot where the prophet Muhammad is said to have ascended to the seventh heaven. Christians to hold in awe this place where Jesus walked.

"Now a controversy has arisen over whether and when a new Jewish temple should be built. Temple reconstruction was no issue until 1967, when Israel captured the Mount and the old city. Eager to preserve peace, Israel continues to allow Muslims to administer the site. They permit no Jew or Christian to pray openly on the holy ground, nor will they consider allowing even the simplest synagogue or church. The merest hint of rebuilding the temple is considered an outrage by the prophet's followers, who, in the words of an official Al-Aqsa, will defend the Islamic holy places to the last drop of their blood.

"Jewish sensitivities also hinder reconstruction. Israel's chief rabbis forbid Jews to set foot on the mount, lest they accidentally step on the site of the ancient holy of holies, where only the high priest entered once a year. In addition, there are various views over how and when a new temple could or should be raised. The Babylonian Talmud offers conflicting opinions, but Roshi, the great medieval sage, insisted that the temple must descend directly from heaven when the Messiah comes.

"On the other hand, tradition holds that God's biblical command to build the temple is irrevocable. And the Jerusalem Talmud says that Jews may construct an intermediate edifice before the messianic era. A 1983 newspaper poll showed that a surprising 18.3% of Israelis thought it was time to rebuild. A mere 3% wanted to wait for the Messiah. Next week, Israel's Ministry of Religious Affairs will sponsor a first-ever conference of temple research to discuss whether contemporary Jews are obligated to rebuild.

"However, several small organizations in Jerusalem believe the question is settled. They are zealously making preparations for the new temple, in spite of the doctrinal obstacles, and the certainty of provoking Muslim fury. These groups eschew violence, but offer no explanation of what should be done about the Muslim shrines that now occupy the holy ground. They point out that the animal sacrifices and other aspects of temple worship are so ingrained in Judaism that they take up a third of the 613 biblical commandments, plus major portions of the Talmud, and the daily ritual. Temple restoration is also a fixation for literal-minded Protestants who deem a new temple the precondition for Christ's Second Coming.

"Two Talmudic music schools, located near the Western Wailing Wall, are teaching nearly 200 students the elaborate details of temple service. Other groups are researching the family lines of Jewish priests who alone may conduct sacrifices. Next year, an organizing convention will be held for those who believe themselves to be of the priestly descent. Former Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren, who heads another temple mount organization, believes his research has fixed the location of the ancient holy of holies so the Jews can enter the mount without sacrilege. He insists, 'I cannot leave this world without assuring that Jews will once again pray on the mount.'

"No group is more zealous than the Temple Institute, whose spiritual leader, 50-year-old Rabbi Israel Ariel, was one of the first Israeli paratroopers to reach the mount in 1967. 'Our task,' states the Institute's American-born director, Zev Golan, "is to advance the cause of the temple, and to prepare for its establishment, not just to talk about it.' During six years of research, the institute has reconstructed 38 of the ritual implements that will be used when temple sacrifices are restored. It will complete the other 65 items as funds permit. A museum of complete pieces has drawn 10,000 visitors during the current holy days.

"In addition to such items as trumpets, lyres, and lots, the institute is preparing vestments for the priest in waiting. According to Scripture, the clothing must be painstakingly made with flax spun by hand into six-stranded threads. One difficulty is the requirement (as in Numbers 19:1-10) that priests purify their bodies with the cremated ashes of an unblemished red heifer before they enter the temple. Following a go-ahead from the Chief Rabbinate, Institute operatives spent two weeks in August scouting Europe for heifer embryos that will shortly be implanted into cows at an Israeli cattle ranch.

"As for rebuilding, none of the groups are believed to be stockpiling limestone and marble just yet. For years, however, a miniature temple model has lured tourists to Jerusalem's Holy Land Hotel, and the institute is preparing blueprints for a more authentic replica that will cost $1 million. All money for the various projects will come from Jews; Christian well-wishers are not allowed to contribute.

"To rabbis like Jerusalem's Pesach Schindler, such efforts are historically interesting, but spiritually superfluous. A member of Judaism's conservative branch, which shuns orthodox literalism regarding the temple, Schindler contends that "religion evolves. We have respect for the past, but it has no operational significance. With the establishment of the state of Israel, we have all our spiritual centers within us. That is where the temple should be built.

"But historian David Solomon insists that a new temple is essential: "It was the essence of our Jewish being, the unifying force of our people. The Temple Institute's Golan admits it must be a long time before the building rises. "No one can say how, and no one wants to do it by force. But sooner or later, in a week or in a century, it will be done. And we will be ready for it." He adds with quiet urgency, "Every day's delay is a stain on the nation."

That is from "Time" magazine, October 16th, 1989. Now, when they came charging in to that Wailing Wall in June of 1967, after so long a time of being separated from this holy site, they made an immediate archeological excavation. How can they build a temple without bringing the wrath of the Arab world down on their heads? This excavation revealed one of the most dramatic discoveries in Israel's history, and that's why one of the speakers here said that they can build a temple tomorrow.

What was that discovery? I'm glad you asked. If you will return for the next session, we will show you the diagrams, and lay out for you why Israel is ready to go full blast with that temple. When it does, Christians, start packing your bags.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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