

13b REV

Let's resume our study now in the book of Revelation. We're looking at chapter 11 where the two witnesses perform their prophetic ministry, exhibit the power of God on earth, centered in and around Jerusalem at a time where there are no believers left in Jerusalem to bear any kind of witness because this is the last half of the 70th week of Daniel. The 1260 days, the last three and a half years, follow, as you might expect, the first three and a half years of that seven year period.

And we know from the book of Daniel the sequence of events that takes place in that seven year period. When you look at Daniel chapter 9, the very famous 70 weeks prophecy beginning in verse 24, 70 weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city. 70 weeks are determined, centered around the holy city, to finish transgression, make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.

And there's a sort of conundrum there, an irony, almost an oxymoron, that in the sealing up of the vision and prophecy, the unsealing of the scroll is going to seal up vision and prophecy. So, he goes on to tell Daniel in verse 25, Which, of course, is 69 weeks, or 69 sevens. These are sevens of years, and that gives you 483 years.

The streets shall be built again, and the wall even in troublesome times. And after the 62 weeks, Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

By the way, this is another one of the ways that we link the Roman Empire, the legs of iron in Nebuchadnezzar's vision in Daniel, to the feet of iron mixed with clay, because the ones who destroy the city and the sanctuary in 70 A.D. are whom? Rome. And the angel tells Daniel, These are the people of the prince who shall come. So, this gives rise to the whole idea of the revived Roman Empire, because the prince who will come, of course, is Antichrist, and he is identified as coming from this people.

Destroy the city and the sanctuary, the end of it with a flood, until the end of the war, desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week. This is the 70th week.

He being the prince who shall come, he will confirm a covenant with many for one week. But in the middle of the week, he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. That would be three and a half years into that 70th week.

This covenant that was supposed to last for seven years is breached and broken after three and a half years. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate. This is really difficult Hebrew.

Nobody, to my knowledge, has definitively figured out what's being said here. There are as many different translations as there are translators on the wing of an abomination, or there's an abomination on the wing, or is it the wing of the temple? What kind of a wing? It's really tough to figure out. There is some speculation to the effect that the temple has to be rebuilt in its original location, and right now you have the Dome of the Rock sitting up there on the temple mount, and so something has to happen to the Dome of the Rock so that the temple can be rebuilt.

But then others, more recently, have done some measuring, some archaeology, and have decided that the temple didn't sit where the Dome of the Rock sits, and it can actually be built next to it, and there would just be a wall dividing the two, and so you essentially would end up with the Dome of the Rock, an Islamic place of worship, next to one of the wings of the rebuilt temple, and this would be the place where the abomination emanates forth, and when these are initially kept separate as a part of the peace and as a part of the covenant, halfway through the week, the Antichrist changes his mind, breaks down the wall, and whatever has been happening over on the Dome of the Rock side is set up on the temple side, and this would be the ultimate triumph of Islam over Judaism. And you can imagine the kind of uproar that this would create. I mean, you know the level of tension and the kind of history that's gone on over there, and you can just imagine the chaos and the turmoil in Jerusalem at that point, and he will bring an end in the middle of the week to sacrifice an offering, and on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, and that's as good a translation as any.

I haven't gotten to Daniel chapter 9 in our verse-by-verse study. When I do, I may have a slightly improved translation, but this is what I have to do for now. Even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.

So the idea here is that something big happens halfway through the week. In the first half, you have this covenant of peace with the many. Sacrifice and offering are taking place at the temple.

Halfway through, that's cut off. At that point of being cut off, when all of the faithful leave Jerusalem, this is what Jesus was talking about over in Matthew, when he said, when you see the abomination of desolation, in Matthew 24, verse 15, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place. This is going to be three and a half years into the 70th week.

Jesus says, when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel, standing in the holy place, whoever reads, let him understand, let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. If you're obedient to Christ, you will leave Judea. You will leave Jerusalem.

Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. Let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days.

It's going to be tough to travel. It's going to be tough to stay concealed. It's going to be tough to not be detected if you have small, whining children.

It's going to be tough to travel if you're heavy with child. Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. Why would the Sabbath make a difference? Age of Israel, time of the Jews.

You're back on a Saturday worship schedule, and observant Jews would not be trying to travel on the Sabbath. Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. Why? Because you're having to do it impromptu.

You don't have supplies. You didn't get to pack. You didn't get to grab your coat, your gloves, your mittens, your scarves.

You don't have anything to keep your children warm. You're just fleeing helter-skelter. Jesus says the only way you're going to survive is to flee rapidly.

So anything that keeps you from fleeing rapidly, pregnancy, small children, winter, being on the Sabbath, where public transportation is going to be shut down and so on, is going to be exceedingly difficult. Then there will be great tribulations. Such has not been since the beginning of the world.

Now, we've had quite a lot of big-time tribulations since the beginning of the world. You've got the ten plagues in Egypt. You've got the flood.

This will be worse. This will be worse than anything in the world. Krakatoa, western Java, Vesuvius, all the blights and dark things that have happened in history won't hold a candle to this.

In fact, nobody's going to be able to hold a candle to this. Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the elect's sake, those days will be shortened.

For the elect's sake, those days will be shortened. Well, what's interesting to me is that we have, throughout this section of Revelation, references to the three and a half years. It's called here, 42 months.

In Revelation chapter 11, verse 2, it is said that the witnesses are going to prophesy 1260 days that's also three and a half years, or 42 months, in 360-day years, 30-day months. And we have references that we're going to come to further down to talk about the three and a half years. And then you have the three and a half days that these dead bodies are going to lay around in the streets.

So three and a half is a very significant number here, isn't it? The duration of the testimony of the witnesses is three and a half years. What was the duration of the Lord

Jesus' presentation of the gospel of the kingdom? Three and a half years. So, you have the idea that this three and a half years compliments the other three and a half years and fills out a biblical seven.

Then after the three and a half days, in verse 11 of chapter 11 of Revelation, the breath of life from God enters them and they stand on their feet. Great fear falls on those who see them. Well, I want to talk for a moment about the 1260 days and about the 42 months.

Because 42 months equaling 1260 days is only true if you have 30-day months. And if that's only three and a half years, if you have 360-day years. This is the prophetic year, 360 days long.

And why would God use a 360-day year? Well, six is the number of man in terms of his time, 6,000 years of human history. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. The seventh day is dedicated to the Lord.

And so, you have this six times 60 giving you 360 idea. But why not 365-day years? Well, I have mentioned this before that I was a little bit troubled because the Daniel 9 prophecy says that there will be 483 years until the coming of Messiah, the Prince, from the going forth of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. When did the decree to rebuild the Jerusalem, walls and city and so forth, when did that decree go forth? Well, this is almost universally understood to be the decree of Artaxerxes.

You had Cambyses, then you had Darius, then you had Xerxes, then you had Artaxerxes in terms of your Medes and Persians. Darius the Mede and then Xerxes and Artaxerxes and so on are Persians. You remember that Ezekiel and Daniel were in the high 590s, 580s.

That's where we are in the beginning of Ezekiel's prophecy. 603 and thereabouts is the time of Daniel. And we know that that's a 70-year captivity, right? So, that's going to take us down into the low 500s, circa 530.

Well, Cambyses rules from 530 to 522 BC. And of course, you have Nebuchadnezzar dying way down there. We said that Daniel is going to live all through the 40 years and in about 560 or so, Nebuchadnezzar checks out.

Well, 30 years later, the Babylonians have more or less exited stage left and, you know, Belteshazzar handwriting on the wall. Here are the Medes and the Persians. The shoulders and arms of silver have supplanted the head of gold.

So, by 530, you have Cambyses. He reigns 8 years followed by Darius. He reigns 36 years from 522 all the way down to 486 BC.

And when Darius scrolls off the scene, that's exactly 100 years, exactly 100 years after

the fall of Jerusalem. 586 BC, 486 BC is when Darius checks out. Then you have Xerxes.

Xerxes reigns 21 years from 486 to 465 BC. Then you have Artaxerxes from 465 to 424. Now, I know that's a lot of numbers, but just keep in mind that the time of Nehemiah, when he's returning to Jerusalem to build the walls and so on, that decree goes forth under Artaxerxes in 445 BC.

You tend to think, well, you know, as soon as the 70 years of captivity under the Babylonians are over, they'll just go back and the temple will go back up. Jerusalem will be restored. Well, Nebuchadnezzar died circa 560.

The Medes and Persians came in 530. So, from 600 to 530, there's your 70 years. And yet, it's not for another 90 years or so until you actually have enough people back and enough interest and the time is right for that decree to rebuild Jerusalem.

So, you remember, of course, Xerxes, that's Esther, and you still have a lot of Jews in Shushan and Persia and so on, well after the formal time of captivity is over. And, you know, Mordecai, he's not in a prison camp or anything. The Jews, they didn't just all pack up and go home.

They had been living there so long that they didn't go back. Well, I say all that to say this. They can line up eclipses and one thing and another, and there's been a lot of work done.

And the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem went forth on March the 13th of 445 BC. March 13th of 445. You know what that was on the Hebrew calendar? First day of Nisan.

Nisan 1, 445. Nisan is also Abib. It's the head of the year.

New Year's Day, 445 BC. Now, the angel told Daniel 483 years to the going forth of Messiah the Prince. 445 BC going forth of the decree.

So, all of us English majors can do math in our head. 483 minus 445 gives you what? 38, right? Am I right? 38. So, by going forward, and you lose a year because there's no zero year.

So, that would be 37 AD. Would be the going forth until Messiah the Prince. Going forth of the decree until Messiah the Prince would be 37 AD.

Well, Jesus had been gone for the better part of a decade by 37 AD, right? Well, and so the way people get around this is they say, well, it's 360 day years. And I say, well, I think you're fudging. Why would you use 360 day years to contract that time and get it to match Jesus? You're assuming your conclusion and working your numbers to make it match.

However, look at Revelation. What kind of years do we have in the book of Revelation? How many days are in the 70th week of Daniel years? How many days are in those seven years of that 70th week? They're 360 day years, aren't they? There's no getting around it. 1260 days is three and a half years.

42 months is three and a half years. The 70th week of Daniel is measured in years that are 360 days long. Now, if the 70th week is made of years that are 360 days long, it would stand to reason that the other 69 weeks would need to be made out of the same kind of years, wouldn't it? What this tells me is the clock on God's wall is not tied to the erratic rotation of this planet.

God set this planet to match his clock before the flood. And with all of the calamitous events that took place in the flood, this is my assumption, because you remember when we were going through Genesis and we saw how many things lined up with sixes and sixties and everything seemed to be in harmony with 360 and 60 and everything. It was sixes everywhere before the flood.

Then after that, I think that if God struck this planet with an asteroid or whatever he did to cause the flood, just his supernatural word that there be a flood slowed down the Earth's rotation, so now it takes it five extra days, or its path around the sun was altered. And it takes it five and a quarter days longer to get around the sun than it used to. So that God continues to measure time for his people in 360 day years.

God doesn't say, well, if you count how many days and nights, he says, look, we're going by my clock because my clock's right. Well, so if you do that calculation, if you take 483, which is the number of years from the decree until Messiah, multiply that times 360, that gives you a number of days. Divide that by 365, which is the number of days in our years, our annual cycle, and you will get, you'll drop seven years.

There's a year in every 75 years, if you think about it. Five times 75, etc. you're going to end up with.

Every 75 years, you'll have enough five day increments to make up another year. So essentially, you lose seven years over that 483 year period, and you wind up at 30 AD, which, you know, right around that time, 29, 30 AD, is when we figure the crucifixion took place. And that's when Messiah is cut off, but not for himself.

So this is the missing piece of the puzzle. You may remember when we talked about the synchronization of prophecy, and I mentioned that I was uncomfortable with people just arbitrarily saying, oh, well, let's use 360 day years. Well, maybe this is how they arrived at that.

And I no longer think it's arbitrary. I think you're forced to that conclusion by the length of years in the 70th week. If the seven years of that week are 360 days, then the other

69 weeks are measured in that same kind of year.

And that lines up exactly with Daniel's prophecy. And you know what's great? There's a copy of the book of Daniel in the Dead Sea Scrolls that is before the time of Christ. And there's no way somebody can say, well, they just faked it up to match.

You know, they're always saying, well, the prophecies were written after the fact to look like they were prophetic. Nobody can say that about Daniel. We've got copies of Daniel from before the time of Christ.

And Daniel's prophecy said Messiah will be cut off, essentially, in 30 AD, and that's exactly when it happened. I mean, to the day. Nisan 1, Jesus is cut off on Nisan 14.

I mean, you can't get much more precise than that. So, back to our passage in Revelation chapter 11. The testimony is finished in chapter 11, verse 7. When these two witnesses finish their testimony.

And this is, essentially, tenelestai. Oh, by the way, one more thing, just so that I'm finished in talking about years. Here's a new question for you.

Because we have often talked about the whole 6,000 year, 7,000 year plan of human history, and how long would we guesstimate that the church age would last as this interim. And we thought, well, 2,000 years, you know, 4,000 years from Adam to Christ, 2,000 years. And that gives you your 6,000 years of history.

And so, based on that plan, if you come forward 2,000 years from 30 AD, or thereabouts, you end up at roughly 2030, you back up 7 years from the tribulation, and you could hypothesize that the rapture might take place around 2023. Well, what if you do the adjustment, and say, let's come forward 2,000 years in 360 day years. Well, if you do the math, you find out that 2,000 years of 360 day years, multiplied by 360, divided by 365, gives you 1,972.

1,972 plus 30, which is where your starting point is for the 2,000 years, puts you at, what? 2,002. So, did we miss it? Did it happen 3 years ago? Is there an extra 3.5 years tacked on to that? Here's my suggestion. The weeks of Daniel are specifically stated in Daniel chapter 9 to be determined on whom.

70 weeks are determined for whom? Your people, your holy city, to finish the transgression, make an end of sins, reconciliation for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Those 360 day years, all 490 of them are determined upon Daniel's people, Daniel's holy city, the Jews. That's all Age of Israel stuff.

Okay? I would suggest that when God is dealing with His people, He's using the 360 day calendar. We are in the times of the Gentiles, and I don't know that you can have that

same expectation that God is going to work on a 360 day year. 360 is the heritage of that line that goes back through Israel, through the patriarchs, back to Adam through Seth.

It is the Old Testament reckoning. It's the Old Testament clock. We're not on the Old Testament clock.

God stopped that clock and started a new clock for us. But it also is a reminder of the hazard of setting dates, because God alone knows how He is measuring and orchestrating, and we just have to take the information that is given to us. But it is interesting, because it is possible that the time is much shorter than we think.

If God is using a 360 day clock, then we don't have another 20 years to wait. We would basically be saying, well, what's the hold up? Because there are 1,972 365 day years in 2,360 day years. And you tack that on to the Church Age beginning in 30 AD, and that gets you right up to 2002.

We're in 2005, so figure it out. I don't see that the time is quite ripe yet. I don't see the temple built.

I don't see the mechanism for the Antichrist or the revived Roman Empire yet in place. And it makes me think that God does not use that clock for the Gentiles. Well, to continue, back to chapter 11 of Revelation.

They finish their testimony. This is a form of that same word Jesus used on the cross, tetelestai, it is finished. And once again, you have this strong link between the witnesses and the work of Jesus on the cross.

Tetelestai, it is finished. When their work, when their witness, when their testimony is tetelestai, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them and kill them. Notice, they cannot be opposed and overcome and defeated until they have finished their testimony.

Nothing can overcome us, nothing can stop us, nothing can thwart us or God's plan for our life until God says it's finished. We've seen what happens with their dead bodies, but then in verse 11, after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered them. And they stood on their feet and great fear fell on those who saw them.

Of course, you can imagine what these bodies have undergone in terms of abuse and desecration and celebration over the course of these three and a half days. Why three and a half days? Everything is about judgment. And judgment takes place in the last three and a half years.

The first three and a half years of the 70th week is the time of the Antichrist. The last three and a half years is the cup of God's wrath being poured out on the human race.

The breaking of the seals, the blowing of the trumpets, pouring out of the bowls, testimony of the witnesses, the dire judgment upon the earth, the like of which has never been seen.

Then those who see these stand on their feet, hear a loud voice from heaven saying to them, Come up here. And they ascend to heaven in a cloud and their enemies see them go. They ascend to heaven in a cloud and the enemies see them go.

In the same hour there is a great earthquake and a tenth of the city falls. A tenth of what city? Jerusalem. Spiritual Sodom, spiritual Egypt, that John has measured with the measuring rod of judgment, that John and James, I believe, have prophesied against for three and a half years.

Immediately when they leave, even their dead bodies seem to protect the city from judgment. And the moment their feet leave the ground, within the hour that city is stricken with an earthquake and a tenth of it falls. In the earthquake 7,000 people are killed.

The rest are afraid to give glory to the God of heaven. Now this is not the same as worshiping God. This is one of those every knee will bow, every tongue will confess, but it does not constitute salvation.

These people are unsaved. The rest of the people, whatever the population of Jerusalem is at that time, if a tenth of the city falls and 7,000 people are killed after all the other plagues and blights and things that have stricken the earth, you might figure that maybe there's 70,000 people left in Jerusalem, which isn't a lot when you look at the modern day, I don't know what the current population of Jerusalem is, but I think it's more than 70,000. But, you know, is this the old city within the walls? What's being measured here? But the rest are afraid to give glory to the God of heaven.

The second woe has passed. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly. And these two woes that have come at the point of the blowing of the sixth trumpet, now the seventh trumpet is going to sound and the final woe is going to strike.

The seventh angel sounded and there were loud voices in heaven saying, The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshipped God saying, We give you thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because you have taken your great power and reigned. The nations were angry and your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that you should reward your servants, the prophets and the saints, and those who fear your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth.

Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple, and there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail. Well, what on earth? What is going on here? The seventh angel sounds. You're now in the seventh year of the seventieth week.

This is the consummation, the last act, the final fulfillment. As we saw at the breaking of the seventh seal, as we saw with the pouring out of the seventh bowl in prospect as we looked ahead, this great earthquake is the marker of the end of the tribulation period. It ends with this giant earthquake.

So we can expect that when we see this, if we don't move on into the millennial kingdom, anything that follows this is going to have to be a backtrack. We're going to rewind, just like we did at the end of the seven seals. So, the seventh angel sounds, loud voices in heaven, the kingdoms of this world have become those of our Lord and of His Christ.

He shall reign forever and ever. So, they're saying, this is it, the kingdoms of this world are no more. You now have one kingdom, it is the kingdom of the Lord and of His Anointed One, His Christ, His Mashiach.

He is going to reign, La'olam. He is going to reign, Ioniou, unto the ages. Unto the end of the ages.

The kingdom age has arrived, essentially. This doesn't mean forever and ever into the eternal indefinite future. Unto the ages means until the age is finished.

So, the 24 elders at that point, who sit before God on their thrones, fall on their faces and worship God. Why? Remember now, all of the activity down on earth with Jerusalem, the witnesses, the judgment, everything else has to do with Israel. It's the time of Israel.

It's the time of judgment of all the nations, peoples, tongues and kings. But, there is still the focus on Jerusalem. And then, all of that is subsumed under the Davidic Messiah, the Son of David, the Christ.

But then, the 24 elders fall and worship God, saying this content in the next two verses. We give you thanks, the One who is and was, who is to come, because you have taken your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, your wrath has come, the time of the dead that they should be judged.

Why would the 24 elders, who we understand as representing the church, the priestly overcomers, those with crowns, those with privilege, those who are going to rule and reign with Christ and so on, are worshiping God and thanking Him because He is reigning and because the time of the dead has come that they should be judged. This is the resurrection of the Old Testament saints. But, the uttering of the thunders, you remember, which is unrevealed, talks about all nations, peoples, tongues and kings and

has something to say about, evidently, the resurrection of those who are not going to be raised at this point.

At some point, in the plan and purpose of God, the announcement is made, you know, time is coming, sayeth the Lord, and many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake. Remember that in Daniel chapter 12? And, that's what is happening here. The last part of Daniel chapter 12 says that from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1,290 days.

Blessed is he who waits and comes to the 1,335 days. But you go your way, for you shall rest and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days. You will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days, O Daniel.

That is the prophecy. That is the expectation. The beginning of that same chapter, Michael stands up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people.

Remember we saw that where the angel was standing on the earth and handed the scroll? At the time when Michael stands up, and we think that's him standing with one foot on the land and one foot on the sea, there will be a time of trouble, never was, your people will be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. Many who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. This everlasting is Laolam, for the duration of the kingdom.

Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. And that is what we see here with the celebration of the 24 elders. The time of the dead that they should be judged has come.

Some are going to awake to a resurrection of life, some to a resurrection of shame and contempt. The wise will shine like the sun. This is that time.

We are at the end of the tribulation period. The earthquake has happened. The judgment of God is fulfilled and now it is time for the dead, who are written in the book, God's book, to be judged.

Then we see the temple of God opening in heaven and the Ark of the Covenant is seen. Why? Well, this very last verse in chapter 11 is where we are going to begin next time. But let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for opening the truth of your word to us. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will minister it to our hearts. May we find in it motivation, encouragement and great hope for our lives both now and in the age to come.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.