

Good Morning His Place! I'm Matthew Tanksley, one of your deacons here at His Place. I want to start off our time together today by bringing up Moses. The great leader of the Hebrew people who wrote the book of Deuteronomy as a book of law for the fledgling nation. You see, he gives us great permission to be thoroughly confused:

Deuteronomy 29:29 (NIV)

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.

We have to be OK not knowing everything, but God has granted us to know some things.

Let's pray.

Interpretations of Revelation

At the start, I have to acknowledge that there are **four main views**, or interpretations, of the book of Revelation that have been **widely held** within Orthodoxy over time, some since the **days of the early church fathers**, by **God fearing Christians of all stripes**. Pastor Joe has eluded to them before, but I'm going to **briefly** define them for you. All four of these views hold that the book was **written prophetically** about the future, from the original audience's point of view. They each accept the **authority of the Scripture as divinely inspired**, the **authorship of John the Apostle**, and the **value of the book** for both the **original audience** and **the church to come**. This is an area of common, but loving, disagreement.

Preterism

Preterism, which comes from the Latin word '**preter**', meaning **the Past**, interprets that the fulfillment of the prophecy was largely **accomplished within the first century AD**. The Preterist interprets the cataclysmic prophecies describing the **destruction of the temple of Jerusalem in AD 70**. This relies on the book having been written before that time, usually in AD 67-68 during the reign and persecution of Emperor Nero. This is in contrast to most modern scholars who hold a later date for the writing, usually AD 96, during the reign of Emperor Domitian. This is of course **the oldest view**, as the **original audience** read the book of Revelation and expected to see "**what must soon take place**". Most Preterists believe that, despite understanding that the cataclysm has occurred already in what we see as the distant past, the **Second Coming of Christ** and **Final Judgement** are **still to come**, and will happen **sometime in the future**.

Historicism

This view holds that the cataclysmic prophecies have been **unfolding since its writing**, and points to many **historical events** as being the fulfillment of specific scenes which John's visions **figuratively describe**. Unfortunately, it is hard to find consensus between followers as to which historical events fulfill the various visions. This view took shape during the **Protestant Reformation in the 16th century**, and painted the **Catholic Papacy as the Beast**. It has however **fallen out of common favor** within the last 200 years, and is **scarcely held anymore**.

Futurism

The futurist believes that most of the prophetic visions from Chapter 4 onwards take place in the **distant future**, and that they describe, **quite literally**, the ways in which God will judge, destroy, and then **rebuild the material world**, and then **establish his eternal kingdom**. This view holds that the cataclysmic prophecies provided as visions are all about the **“end times”**. This view also has its origins in the **16th century**, but it really took off with the rise of the theological framework called **Dispensationalism** that began in the **mid-19th century**. It is currently the **most popular view** within **American Evangelicalism**.

Idealism

The idealist view believes that the visions in the book of Revelation **figuratively depict the way that God acts** in Judgement, Mercy, Redemption, and Salvation **throughout all time**. Therefore, the cataclysmic visions can be referenced in all sorts of events **throughout history**, which explains and accepts much of how the previously described views have taken root. In this way, the view allows the prophecy to **look backwards and forwards throughout history**, and **reveals God’s character**. This view had its **beginnings in the 3rd century** with the **Early Church Fathers** like **Origen** and **Augustine**.

Now it’s important to stress here that despite the differences in these interpretations, one thing remains absolutely clear, **the character of Jesus Christ**. **I hold the Idealist view point**, and while my **interpretations** of some passages in Revelation, regarding the **meaning of certain symbols** or language in Revelation, or how a prophecy has been or will be fulfilled, might differ from other Pastors here at His Place **who hold the Futurist view**, the **principle, application** and **main meaning** of the passage will remain the same. One of the **traps** of any interpretation is called **“newspaper exegesis”**, or reading the news headlines **into** the Bible rather than letting the Bible **speak for itself**. Because of this, it is important to not get so caught up in minutiae that we miss the **forest for the trees**. So, as I said last time I’ll say again, we need to:

Study what the Bible teaches, and not our speculation about what it doesn't.

Before I get into our text today, which will be in Revelation 11, if you want to turn there now, I must explain some things that I believe will help us make sense of what we are reading in Revelation. **The first is genre.**

Apocalyptic Literature

The book of Revelation is on the whole, a work of Apocalyptic Literature. What is an apocalypse? The word “Apocalypse” or “Αποκάλυψις” (pronounced Apokalupsis) in Greek means **“an unveiling”**. Apocalyptic Literature is writings about an Apocalypse, and can be defined as

“A literary genre using vivid imagery in which a supernatural entity reveals cosmic mysteries or the future to a human intermediary. The means of mediation include dreams, visions and heavenly journeys, and they typically feature symbolic imagery drawn from the Jewish Bible, cosmological and historical surveys, the division of time into periods, esoteric numerology, and claims of ecstasy and inspiration.”

This genre takes its name from the book of Revelation, but it has its origins during the return from the Babylonian exile. Revelation was **not the first**, and **it wasn’t the last**, however it is certainly the **most widely**

recognized writing in this genre. The purpose of Apocalyptic Literature is to **reveal something** that was either hidden or misunderstood, in a way that both **comforts and challenges** us.

Next, I want to point out that **the ancient Jews often used numbers symbolically**. And they even did Math with them, not necessarily in literal but symbolic mathematics. The number 7 represents **perfect, holy, and divine completeness**. The 7 spirits of God represent the perfect, holy and divine completeness of God's Spirit. In contrast, other numbers are meant to represent **in-completeness**, by their **relation** to the numbers of completeness. For example, **7 is a perfect divine number**, but half of that would be **3 and a half**. This will be used to describe some point **midway through the completion of time**, an **interrupted, cut short, or broken number**, not allowed to **run its full course**. We will see this play out in the unfolding narrative here in chapter 11.

So, let's quickly set the stage, and **refresh our memory** because it's been 2 weeks since Pastor Joe shared from Revelation. **Are you ready for a whirlwind recap? Here we go.** In Chapter 10, John has this vision of this ginormous "**mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars.**" He was holding a little scroll, and spoke like a roaring lion and shouted like "seven thunders". **What did he say? <keep your secrets meme>** No idea, John was told to seal that up, and not to write it down.

The angel then swears by God and says,

Revelation 10:6b-7

There will be no more delay! But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."

John is then instructed to eat that little scroll.

Revelation 10:10-11

I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour. 11 Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."

That's where we left off, now let's dive into our text for today as John is now about to give this Prophecy. The book of Revelation was meant to be read aloud, so I'm going to read **all of Chapter 11** straight through, so we can **get a feel for it**, and then I'll **break it down for you**.

Revelation 11:1-19

1 I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshipers. 2 But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months. 3 And I will appoint my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth." 4 They are "the two olive trees" and the two lampstands, and "they stand before the Lord of the earth." 5 If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. 6 They have power to shut up the heavens so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they

have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

7 Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them. 8 Their bodies will lie in the public square of the great city—which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt—where also their Lord was crucified. 9 For three and a half days some from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial. 10 The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth.

11 But after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them. 12 Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.

13 At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second woe has passed; the third woe is coming soon.

15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said:

“The kingdom of the world has become
the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah,
and he will reign for ever and ever.”

16 And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying:

“We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
the One who is and who was,
because you have taken your great power
and have begun to reign.

18 The nations were angry,
and your wrath has come.
The time has come for judging the dead,
and for rewarding your servants the prophets
and your people who revere your name,
both great and small—
and for destroying those who destroy the earth.”

19 Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.

Pretty exciting stuff!! So what is happening here? **So many questions!**

Let's go back to the beginning, and see if we can unpack this a bit. First, John is given a reed, or a stick, like a measuring rod. The reed's that grow along the Jordan river, are hollow, tall, rigid, and of varying diameters. So think of this kinda like a **length of bamboo** being used as a **measuring stick**.

There are many instances of measuring things in the Bible. In **Job 38**, God chastises Job for "**speaking without knowledge**" by calling his **authority and dominion** into question.

Job 38:4-5

"Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?

Tell me, if you understand.

Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!

Who stretched a measuring line across it?

In this case, God is pointing out that Job doesn't know the **true things of this world**, he wasn't there when it was **planned out and built**. Another instance of measurement was when Zechariah, a prophet during the end of the Jewish exile in Babylon, had a vision of man walking with a measuring line, and he was off to measure the **whole city of Jerusalem**. Now this vision came to him many years after the Babylonians had **destroyed the Temple of God**, and sacked the whole city of Jerusalem. Its **walls had been torn down**, and the **city was in waste**. But the angel in Zechariah's vision said,

Zechariah 2:4b-5

... 'Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the great number of people and animals in it. 5 And I myself will be a wall of fire around it,' declares the LORD, 'and I will be its glory within.'

You'll notice here that John is told to "**measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshipers**". The Greek word for the "**temple**" here is "**nao**" which is actually the word used to describe the **inner sanctum** of the overall temple: **the Holy Place**. The altar would then be in the **Holy of Holies**, which is where the **Shekinah glory of the Lord** rested. In fact, only the **High Priest** was allowed in there, and that only once a year. That's a **tall order to measure with a reed**, but he **doesn't actually tell us anything** about those measurements. Later in Revelation 21, an angel will measure the **entire city of New Jerusalem**, also with a reed, but there is **no temple there!**

I believe that John's reference here to **measuring the temple** is a call back to the prophet Ezekiel. If you remember, Ezekiel was a prophet in the time of the Babylonian Exile. **14 years after** the city of Jerusalem was **sacked by the Babylonians**, and it's people carted off; **14 years after** the **Temple of God was destroyed**; A vision of God came to the prophet Ezekiel and there he saw a **man whose appearance was like bronze** with a **measuring rod in his hand**. He was told to take careful notes, and then to tell the people of Israel of **everything he sees**. The man proceeds then to **measure the east gate**, the **outer court**, the **gates**, the **inner court, etc**. The whole vision culminates with this **river of life** that flows directly out of the **threshold of the Holy Place**, and out of the city and into the wilderness **bringing life to a barren waste** and turning it into an **idyllic garden**, much like the picture of the **Garden in Eden from Genesis**. In that account God's delightful garden had **4 rivers flowing out of it** that brought life and prosperity to the **rest of the world**. In this one, it's the **Temple of God** that brings **life to the world**, and **creates a Garden** where there was none before. But here's the kicker, Ezekiel's vision was **after** the Temple of God had been destroyed! Now, let's look back at Zechariah's vision for a second. God's statement is that He will be "**a wall of fire around it**", and He will be

"its glory within". So what temple was John supposed to be measuring? In Jewish History, there have been **2 Temples built** by human hands for God in Jerusalem. The first was **Solomon's temple**, which was **destroyed in 586 BC**. The **second temple was built** after the 70 year exile, in 516 BC, and **destroyed by the Romans in AD 70**. Since most scholars agree that **by the time John wrote** the book of Revelation around AD 96, the **temple had already been destroyed!** His vision to measure the temple must be in reference to a **replacement temple**. But what sort of temple will God dwell in, **since the veil was torn in the Holy of Holies**, and **His Spirit now dwells in Human Hearts?** Asked and answered. That's right! **The people of God are His Temple!**

1 Corinthians 3:16

16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?

2 Corinthians 6:16

16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

**"I will live with them
and walk among them,
and I will be their God,
and they will be my people."**

That last part there was actually a reference to Ezekiel 37:27, **livin large in the NT**. Paul is referring to the **same Temple that Ezekiel had in his visions**. Which fits nicely into the motif I **mentioned a few weeks ago** about John's **startling and unexpected revelations**. As a refresher, all throughout the book of Revelation John **hears one thing, and turns and sees something else**. In this case, he is told to **measure the temple** but not the outer courts, because it has been given to the Gentiles, **or unbelievers**, who will trample the holy city for a period of 42 months, but then **the vision turns immediately to focus on two witnesses**, described as both **"olive trees"** and **"lampstands"**, who will prophesy for 1260 days. He's **expecting a temple, but he gets two witnesses**. So who are these two witnesses? John refers to them as the **Two Olive Trees**, which is a **direct reference to Zechariah** chapter 4, where they are assumed to be **Joshua the High Priest** and **Zerubbabel the governor of Judea**. Zerubbabel laid the **foundation of the 2nd temple** and Joshua served as High Priest in it. The angel in the vision states that in verse 14:

Zechariah 4:14

14 So he said, "These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth."

The witnesses are also referred to as two lampstands, which John was kind enough to tell us already, in chapter 1, that **lampstands represent churches**.

Revelation 1:20

20 The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches

At the end of each of the letters to the churches, Jesus promises a blessing **"to the one that is victorious"**. The blessing is different for each church, but foreshadows things we will see throughout the book of

Revelation. In this case, the **two churches that were praised, Smyrna and Philadelphia**, were promised to **“not be hurt by the second death”**, and to be made **“a pillar in the temple of God”**. These witnesses could represent those **who remain faithful to Christ at this time, standing and serving before the Lord** of the earth.

These witnesses are further described by their **authority and power**. **Fire will come from their mouths, to devour their enemies**. They will have power to **turn water into blood**, and to **strike the earth with plagues**.

The mention of fire coming from their mouths is a reference to the **Prophet Jeremiah**, who in chapter 5 of his book is setting forth his **Accusation of Israel** during the decades just **before the exile**. His prophecy about **Jerusalem’s impending doom** was close at hand, and he spoke for God accusing Israel and its leaders of **not being faithful to their God**. God speaks these words to Jeremiah, before he proclaims God’s judgment.

Jeremiah 5:14

14 Therefore this is what the LORD God Almighty says:

“Because the people have spoken these words,

I will make my words in your mouth a fire

and these people the wood it consumes.

Later on in his book, Jeremiah uses this **same language** to describe the **word of the Lord in his heart**, that Jeremiah is **weary of holding in**, despite the **ridicule, insult and torment** he endures at the hands of God’s own people.

Jeremiah 20:9

9 But if I say, “I will not mention his word

or speak anymore in his name,”

his word is in my heart like a fire,

a fire shut up in my bones.

I am weary of holding it in;

indeed, I cannot.

Then later in Jeremiah, chapter 23, **God declares Woe** to those who are **“destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!”** There is a group of false prophets who are filling the ears and hearts of Israel with a **false hope that God is OK with their sin and rebellion**. The people hear those words and **reject the words of Jeremiah**.

Jeremiah 23:27-32

27 They think the dreams they tell one another will make my people forget my name, just as their ancestors forgot my name through Baal worship. 28 Let the prophet who has a dream recount the dream, but let the one who has my word speak it faithfully. For what has straw to do with grain?” declares the LORD. 29 “Is not my word like fire,” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

God’s judgment against His own people in Jeremiah’s day is **mirrored in John’s vision of the witnesses** in Revelation. The words that they speak will be a **fire that consumes their enemies**. But much like in Jeremiah’s time, God’s **righteous anger is never only to destroy, it is meant to redeem!** See in verse 27, **“They think the dreams they tell one another will make my people forget my name”**. His hope is that

Jeremiah's words will **reawaken the memory** in the people of the **Name of the Lord**. His Character, and His love for them. On your own, go read the book of Jeremiah, **let's call it homework**. His hope for redemption is all throughout the book.

In verse 6, we see that they have **two very interesting powers** bestowed upon them, in addition to the **fire that comes from their mouths**. Power to **cause drought**, and power to **inflict plagues**. If these sound familiar, they should. The time frame for which they are prophesying is **eerily similar** to the time frame in which the prophet **Elijah shut up the heavens so that it could not rain**. Similarly, his command to do this came at a time when the Lord was trying to **get Israel's attention** because their **leaders were leading them into apostasy**. The King at the time, Ahab, had taken a foreign wife, Jezebel, and she had brought with her **demonic idol worship** that involved all sorts of nasty things like **ritual prostitution, priestly mutilation**, and even **child sacrifice**. Elijah spoke the words of the Lord, and the **rain did not come for 3 years**. This culminated in the famous scene on Mount Carmel, where Elijah **called down fire from heaven** when Baal's prophets could not. After that famous scene, Elijah **fled the wrath of Jezebel and wept** before the Lord that he was the **only one left to still serve the Lord**. The Lord **comforted Elijah**, and told him that despite appearances, He **reserved 7,000 in Israel** who had not bowed a knee to Baal.

Ooh, now we're getting into good stuff! Verse 7! Now, we see this mysterious Beast come up from some **place called the Abyss** and attack our **faithful witnesses**, overpower them –despite their heavenly power and authority, **and kill them**, or so it seems...

Ok, let's stop right there. This is the **first mention of a Beast** in the New Testament. In fact in the whole Bible, outside of **this passage and Revelation 13**, a Beast is only mentioned in the **book of Daniel**, and there are 4 of them there. In Daniel, chapter 7, we find Daniel having a fairly decent night's sleep in which he has a dream that becomes a vision. In this vision **he sees four beasts rising from the sea**, but the fourth was **different from the rest –"terrifying, frightening, and very powerful"** and it had large iron teeth and **10 horns**. It crushed and devoured its victims, and **trampled them underfoot**. Daniel was troubled by the beasts, but **especially the fourth one**, and so, as you do, he asked an angel who happened to be there in his vision. The angel told him that **the beasts represented kingdoms** that would rise on the earth. When pressed specifically about the terrible fourth beast, the angel said this:

Daniel 7:23-27

23 "He gave me this explanation: 'The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it. 24 The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. 25 He will speak against the Most High and oppress his holy people and try to change the set times and the laws. The holy people will be delivered into his hands for a time, times and half a time. 26 "But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. 27 Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.'

We'll see more about this Beast when we get to Chapter 13, so I won't dwell too much on his role, but **suffice it to say that he is Antichrist**, and he is **subservient to the Dragon** that we'll meet in Chapter 12. Spoilers! I will note here that in Daniel's vision we are told that the **Holy People** will be **delivered into his hands** for a

“time, times and half a time”. The Aramaic word here for **“time”**, is **“zeman”** and it refers to **some appointed time**. It could be a **season**, an **epoch**, or just **“that time”** when something happens. It’s generally understood in Daniel to be in reference to **a year**. In which case it would be **a year, 2 years, and half a year, or 3.5 years**. This is equivalent both to the **1260 days that our two faithful witnesses are prophesying for**, and the **42 months in which the holy city was trampled on by the unbelievers**.

So this Beast, which **represents a socio-political power** like a great nation or kingdom that is **warring against the people of God**, will claim a great victory over God’s People and will **seem to silence** the witness of His faithful. The whole world rejoices at the thought that their great Beast has, **it seems**, finally silenced the prophetic work of the people of God. Their bodies are **put on display**, to great celebration for **3.5 days**. But then God **interrupts the whole thing**, and **breathes the breath of life** into them, and the Lord **calls them up into Heaven**, in sight of everyone on earth! Remember what I said about the number **3 and a half**? It refers to an **incomplete, interrupted or broken time**. The witnesses are **interrupted** by the warring Beast, and now the **celebration of their death is interrupted** by God himself!

In a reference to another vision, **straight out of Ezekiel again**, just like God did to the **Valley of Dry Bones**, God **breathes life** directly into **the dead who should have been deader than dead**. As in the visions before, when the Lord speaks **the earth shakes and thunder rolls**. 7,000 people were killed in an earthquake, as a tenth of this great city collapses, and we **finally see the ultimate vindication of God’s words**, and the authority of these witnesses in verse 13, **“the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven”**. Over the course of chapters 8 and 9, we’ve seen God **doling out his wrath**, 6 trumpets full of them, and yet the result that we see from all of that, is that **the earth is not impressed**.

Revelation 9:20-21

20 The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. 21 Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.

But **finally**, these two witnesses and the Lord’s resurrection of them have done **what all of that destruction could not**. It makes perfect sense now that the great company of Heaven would now **cry out in praise!**

Revelation 11:15b

**“The kingdom of the world has become
the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah,
and he will reign for ever and ever.”**

As the angel told Daniel in about the Beast

Daniel 7:26-27

26 “But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. 27 Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.”

The Beast, which represents the socio-political power of the greatest kingdom of the world, has **become the kingdom of our Lord** and of his Messiah! Amen! What's left to do but to **worship the Lord God Almighty**? Well, they do:

Revelation 11:17-19

**17 "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
the One who is and who was,
because you have taken your great power
and have begun to reign.**

**18 The nations were angry,
and your wrath has come.
The time has come for judging the dead,
and for rewarding your servants the prophets
and your people who revere your name,
both great and small—
and for destroying those who destroy the earth."**

What a beautiful picture of the **character of our God!** The vindicating, **redemptive**, wrathful, but **merciful God**. Hallelujah!

Revelation 11:19

19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.

The word for "**temple**" here in the Greek, is again the word "**nao**", so it's referring to that inner sanctum of the Holy Place. We're getting a peek inside to the **Holy of Holies** and we see the **Ark of the Covenant**, and big surprise it's not some Government Warehouse. The Ark of the Covenant, was a **physical representation of the promise, or covenant**, that God made to his people through Moses. That ark was placed, with Moses' **stone tablets**, a **golden urn of Manna**, and **Aaron's budding staff of miracles**. It was kept in the Holy of Holies, and when the **Babylonians destroyed Solomon's temple** in 586 BC, **the ark was lost**. The prophet Ezekiel **had a vision** before **the sacking of Jerusalem** that showed, to the **dismay of Ezekiel** and the rest of Israel, that **the Shekinah Glory of God had left the building**. He had **abandoned the Holy of Holies before the desolation**. When Zerubbabel **rebuilt the temple** in 516 BC, as the Babylonian Talmud tells us, **the Glory of the Lord never returned**. When Jesus died on the cross, **the veil to the Holy of Holies was torn**, adding insult to injury, but Hallelujah, on the Day of Pentecost the **Holy Spirit descended once more upon Jerusalem** to reside in His **new temple**, the **People of God!** His **covenant promise has been fulfilled**, he is now and forever more **with His people**, and the **whole world will worship Him** as he **reigns forever and ever. Amen!**