

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Two Witnesses, Part 3

Scripture: Revelation 11:7-14

Code: 66-38

Well what a great joy and privilege it has been for us to be studying the book of Revelation. Wherever I travel, and I've been traveling a little bit in the last few months, people always ask me, "What are you preaching on at your church?" And when I tell them well we're doing Revelation on Sunday night, they become very envious. There is a new interest in the book of Revelation all across the country and it's been wonderful for us to be enjoying this great book and distributing tapes as we preach them here all across the country. There are so many people who just are eager to understand this tremendous, tremendous book.

Now tonight we come into chapter 11 and it's been a while since we looked at the text, the first part of the chapter. I want to give you just a brief sort of overview and feeling of it so you can recapture the essence of it. This is part 3 in a series from verses 3 to 14 on the subject of "My two witnesses," actually from the beginning of the chapter on.

In order to get in to chapter 11, and you can stay where you are, I need to read you some words from the Apostle Paul in Romans chapter 11, just listen to them because I think they are a very important background. Paul in Romans 11:25 says, "For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And thus all Israel will be saved, just as it is written, the deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob and this is My covenant with them when I take away their sins. From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice, they are beloved for the sake of the fathers for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."

Now what Paul is saying there is really a promise to the nation Israel of their ultimate salvation. Their hardening is only partial and it is only temporary. The day will come when all Israel will be saved. This is God's covenant with them when He promised to some day take away their sins. This is a matter of God's choice and the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable.

That little phrase there, "so all Israel will be saved," is a very important one. There will be a marvelous fulfillment of God's unbreakable promises to the fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And many, many times the Lord reiterated this promise. The Lord again and again reminded His people Israel that their day of salvation would come.

In Leviticus, way back in the Pentateuch, chapter 26 and verse 44, it says, "Yet in spite of this when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God. But I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations that I might be their God, I am the Lord." Nothing is going to change God's unbreakable promise.

In the prophets, Jeremiah chapter 31 again reiterates this promise. These are not the only places but samplings of them. In Jeremiah 31 and verse 35, "Thus says the Lord who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar, the Lord of host is His name, if this fixed order departs from before Me, declares the Lord, then the offspring of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me forever. Thus says the Lord, if the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the Lord."

In other words, that is God's way of saying there is nothing that is going to cause Me to turn My back ultimately on Israel. That promise is as sure as the fixed order of the universe and the immeasurable immensity of the heavens and the secrets of the depths and foundations of the earth.

In Isaiah's prophecy, right toward the end of that great prophecy, in chapter 62, first of all, we read in verses 6 and 7 similar affirmation. "On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen all day and all night, they will never keep silent. You who remind the Lord take no rest for yourselves and give him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth." What he is saying is you just keep petitioning God until God acts and restores and redeems Jerusalem and makes them a praise in the earth.

Over in chapter 66 beginning in verse 8, "Who has heard such a thing, who has seen such things, can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once? As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons. Shall I bring to the point of birth and not give delivery, says the Lord? Or shall I who give delivery shut the womb, says your God?"

In other words, am I going to come right up the moment of Israel's glory and not let it happen? No. Verse 10, "Be joyful with Jerusalem, rejoice for her all you who love her, be exceedingly glad with her, all you who mourn over her that you may nurse and be satisfied with her comforting breasts, that you may suck and be delighted with her bountiful bosom, for thus says the Lord, Behold, I extend peace to her like a river and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream. And you shall be nursed, you shall be carried on the hip and fondled on the knees as one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem." That is great, graphic, prosaic language to describe Jerusalem, a redeemed nation, a redeemed city that suckles the whole world, giving them, as it were, the milk of truth and righteousness in the day of her own restoration. The day will come

when Israel will be born, born in a day. Has God cast away His people? The answer is no, no, no, a thousand times no. The time of Jacob's trouble which is known as the Tribulation time will become the time of Jacob's salvation. This is the comforting truth of Revelation chapter 11. This is the theme of this great chapter, at least the first part of it.

Now as we have reminded you from messages in the past, between the sixth and seventh trumpet that blow during the time of the Tribulation to announce cataclysmic judgment, between the sixth and seventh trumpet, there is a pause. And that pause which we have been studying began there in chapter 10 and runs down through verse 14 of chapter 11, that pause is to assure all that God will be gracious. In spite of the unrelenting judgment, in spite of all the disaster, the demon activity, the satanic effort, in spite of Antichrist's terror, in spite of the judgment, the fury, the vengeance and the wrath of God during that time, still God will be gracious. In chapter 10 we noted that truth will be preached, saving truth will be preached, according to verse 11. There will be the responsibility of some not only to write but others to preach, so that people can believe. And then in chapter 11, even during that time Israel will be saved.

I believe that it's during the Tribulation that Israel will be saved and the last events of the Tribulation will be the great movement of God that causes the most immense reaction in Israel to saving truth. Already we know a hundred and forty-four thousand Jews have been saved and they are a hundred and forty-four thousand witnessing missionaries all over the globe. They've been sealed to witness during the seven-year period. They are protected from death and they go about the world proclaiming the gospel truth. Already we know that they have had an effect. Gentiles have believed. Jews have believed.

But in this scene in chapter 11 we meet two other preachers and they are the ones who really are used by God as the instruments of the final harvest of the nation Israel, right before the very end of the day of the Lord. They are identified for us as two witnesses and I believe that there have been Jews being saved since the hundred and forty-four thousand started preaching, but now there is going to be a tremendous response and we will note it as we finish this great section tonight. And it will be at the prompting and the preaching and under the power of these anointed two witnesses.

Let's look again at verse 3. "And I will grant authority to My two witnesses and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days clothed on sackcloth." Now let me remind you that this tells us about their duty, they will prophesy. These two men will preach warning. They will preach judgment. They will explain the coming wrath of God. They will explain what is going on at the present time since judgments have already been going on through the first of the seals and then the first of the trumpets and are about to break out in the final bowl judgments. They will be calling for repentance. They will be calling for belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their duty, they will prophesy.

Their attitude, verse 3 says they are clothed in sackcloth. The garments of sorrow, mourning, humility and penitence.

Their identity, verse 4, they are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. I told you that the imagery here with the olive trees and the lampstands parallels Zechariah's prophecy chapters 3 and 4 where two olive trees and two lampstands represent Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the ruler. They were the two men that God used in ancient Israel with the power of the Spirit to rebuild and revive Israel after their captivity. God raised up those two olive trees, those two lampstands, Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the ruler, so be His instruments to bring revival and rebuilding to Israel. They were then the agents...the human agents of God's divine and ancient restoration of Israel physically and spiritually. They were the, you remember, the golden pipes through which the Holy Spirit's power flowed.

Like them there will be in the end time two witnesses, two other men through whom God will flow in Holy Spirit power to bring about renewal, salvation, restoration of Israel. And the bringing in of the glorious Kingdom. He used two men in ancient Israel, He will use two men in the future.

The question always comes...who are they? We don't know. The best guess is they are Moses and Elijah come back to earth. That is a real possibility, we can't be dogmatic about that. We can't be certain. But they will be two very powerful servants of God. So their task, their attitude and their identity is made clear.

We come in verses 5 and 6 to their power...their power. Obviously if they're going to impact the world, if any two men were going to impact the world just two men, they would have to be very powerful, especially in the midst of what is going on. All of the horrifying things with demons that have been belched out of the pits of hell running loose all over the earth, two hundred million more demons loosed to not only sting man with stings that don't let them die, but to massacre men so that they are literally killed. Adding to that Antichrist and all the armies of the world in war. Adding to that the fury of the cataclysms that come on the earth by the judgment of God as the heavens collapse, you've got a horrifying scenario going on in the world, as I noted for you a few weeks ago the environmentalists ultimate nightmare as everything is collapsing.

In the midst of that, if two men are going to have any impact, they're going to have to be powerful men. And verse 5 says they are. "If anyone dares to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies." If anyone desires to harm them, and believe me, they will because they will be violently hated for preaching judgment, preaching wrath, preaching vengeance, preaching repentance. Some will repent at their preaching at first, but as the Great Tribulation, you remember, moves on to the sixth trumpet, people don't repent. The end of chapter 9 verse 21, they do not repent of their murders, of their sorceries, of their immorality or of their thefts. And when they refuse to repent, they will curse the preachers of repentance.

But God is merciful and just before the final blowing of the seventh trumpet which contains the seven bowls which is the final rapid-fire holocaust at the end of the day of the Lord, leading up to Christ's return and the establishment of His Kingdom which involves the destruction of all the ungodly, before that happens the Lord sends two final powerful witnesses. Like Enoch and Noah before the Flood, like Moses in Egypt before the judgments, like John the Baptist before the Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem, God mercifully sends preachers to warn.

Now people are going to try to harm them. I mean, I think we're moving very fast in our own nation and the world around us to the place where Christian preachers who preach forthright messages of repentance and the gospel are going to be harmed. A very real possibility. By this time you can only imagine what they'll want to do to them.

However, verse 5 says, "If anyone desires to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies." Now just imagine watching that on the evening news because that's where it's going to be seen. Somebody will come along and take a gun and fire the gun and the response will be "Haaa." The word devour, consumes. I think this is as literal a fire as it needs to be to burn up a literal body. If anyone, verse 5 says, would desire to harm them in this manner, he must be killed. It is necessity, it is absolute necessity. Why? Because they have to be invincible. And the message has to be sent loud and clear, you better not fool with those guys. People have done that and they've been incinerated instantaneously.

Now, folks, that's power. They are to be invincible because God doesn't want their preaching stopped. It is very important to the salvation of the nation Israel and to others. I believe many are going to die that way. I believe there's going to be effort after effort concocted to try to get rid of them. But everybody who tries will be instantly ignited and turned into ashes. I think many are going to want them dead. I think the world will endeavor to find strategies that can do the job and they will be unsuccessful because these two are absolutely invincible.

Now verse 6 tells us some more about why people are going to want to kill them. In order to demonstrate that they're from God and that they have power, it says, "These have the power to shut up the sky in order that rain may not fall during the days of their prophesying." That's an interesting thought. They have the power to shut up the sky in order that the rain might not fall during the days of their prophesying. We just read they're going to prophesy for how long? Three and a half years. We could conclude by that that it's not going to rain in the second half of the Tribulation. It may mean that it's not going to rain in the given place where they are doing their prophesying. It may mean that it's not going to rain for the duration of their prophecy, three and a half years. Perhaps that's a more likely understanding of the text because that seems to fit the experience of Elisha, doesn't it? Elijah rather. Elijah shut up the heavens for three and a half years. And they are going to be able to do that. You can only imagine with all of the disasters that are going on all over the globe, all of the

horrifying destruction that is going on, when they shut the sky like it says of Elijah in Luke 4:25, James 5:17, when they shut the sky up and there's no water to quench the thirst, there's no water to water the animals, no water to water the plants, no water period, for forty-two months, for three and a half years while they're preaching and it doesn't rain and they're the ones doing this to the world, this is going to exacerbate the hatred that is already there from the impenitence who can't stand their preaching. The hatred will escalate as the crops die, whatever crops remain, as the people starve to death, as the world is in a three and a half year drought.

Whatever waters still exist, notice the middle of verse 6, they have the power over those waters to turn them into blood. Just like Moses did again in Exodus chapter 7 verse 20. Now remember, the waters have already been devastated. The second and the third trumpets just devastated the waters. Back in chapter 8 verse 8, the sea has already had a third of it destroyed. A third of it became like blood. A third of the rivers and springs, chapter 8 verse 10, became bitter like wormwood which meant they were no longer useful to drink. The waters have already been devastated, and now it hasn't rained. And now whatever water there is left, if they want they can turn into blood.

And then the end of verse 6 says they'll smite the earth with every plague as often as they desire. Plague here, plague there, plague here, plague there, wreaking absolute and utter havoc all over everywhere. Certainly not a user-friendly duo. Their power is awesome. They make Samson look like a weakling. They preach repentance, they preach salvation, they preach grace, they preach forgiveness, they preach judgment to come and they are absolutely unstoppable. And everybody in the world knows about them. Every night on the news it will be there constantly...they're at it again. They spoke and there's a plague in this city. They spoke and there's a plague in this city. They spoke and all of the fresh water in this area of a certain country is turned into blood and can't be consumed and there's no water for the people. The drought is severe and people are dying of thirst. They're at it again.

Effort after effort after effort must be made to destroy them. And every time anybody gets near them, they are consumed by fire from their mouths until verse 7, "And when they finished their testimony," that's a very important statement. They're immortal. They are death defying and they are deadly, but only until their allotted time is done. As it comes down to the end, near the end of the three and a half years, the beast that comes up out of the abyss, by the way this is the first mention in the book of Revelation of the beast, there will be thirty-five more mentions, this is the first one, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them and overcome them and kill them. He's been at work for all the three and a half years, I'm sure trying to do this. This beast is none other than the Antichrist who made a pact with Israel at the beginning of the seven years, desecrated the temple at the midpoint, set himself up as God, and has been ruling the world since...as much as he could be ruling the world with it being overrun by demons and the wrath of God. Revelation 13 later will recapitulate his career through the Tribulation, we'll see the whole deal as we saw it in 2 Thessalonians some months back.

But the beast who is Antichrist comes up out of the pit, his home, the origin of his passion and character is hell. He is demon possessed. He is Satan empowered. He is a man. He is human. But he is empowered by the pit, the abyss, hell itself. And the Antichrist is victorious over these two preachers. The world is so glad that they're finally dead, verse 8 says, "Their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified." The great city is Jerusalem.

The great city is Jerusalem. That's what he has in mind. It is called in chapter 21 and verse 10 the holy city, here it is called the great city. It is Jerusalem, there it is the heavenly, here it is the earthly. He also identifies it as Sodom and Egypt. The two most wicked places. Sodom a city, Egypt a nation, synonymous with wickedness, immorality, oppression, violence, godlessness. How sad. How sad that these men are killed in the city which was God's city, the city of God's people but it has become really better titled Sodom and Egypt.

You say why were they killed there? What's the point? I believe the reason they were killed there is because that is the place where the great majority of their preaching goes on because I believe they're the instruments that God uses to proclaim the saving gospel to Israel in the end that causes Israel's ultimate belief in their Messiah.

By that time Gentile power under the Antichrist will have overrun Jerusalem. The temple will have been desecrated. The Antichrist will set up his satanic rule there. Godlessness will reign so that that place is no different than Sodom, it is no different than Egypt, both terms being synonymous with the ultimate in pagan wickedness.

And then he identifies it clearly as Jerusalem because at the end of the verse he says, "Where also their Lord was crucified."

Preaching there they are, remember now, the Jews will still be in their land and they will still be there in that city and that's where they're preaching when their death comes. Please notice they're not buried. It says their dead bodies are in the streets. That city once holy, once again in the future to be holy, is now vile and in the streets of that city their bodies lie. Verse 9, amazing, "And those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations," that's a familiar technical term for the Gentile world, the whole world, "will look at their dead bodies..." How will they do that? How will they do that? Television. That couldn't have been true before the invention of television. The whole world will look at their dead bodies. "For three and a half days and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb." They'll watch them decay. Three days is enough to see some severe decay. When Lazarus had been in the tomb only a few days, you remember the comment was, "By this time he stinketh." The unrepentant, unconverted masses will gloat with the Antichrist and give the Antichrist glory because He was able to kill these two whom no one could kill, but by whom many died. The morbid

ghoulish display of hatred shows how hardened they are as they let those bodies just lie in the street decaying.

By the way, that was done in ancient times. When pagan people wanted to dishonor their enemies, they would leave their corpses lying in the street. That was the ultimate dishonoring, the ultimate denigration of someone. In Deuteronomy 21:22 the Bible says, "If a man has committed a sin worthy of death, he's to be put to death, you hang him on a tree, his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, you shall surely bury him on the same day so that you do not defile your land." God says you bury him the same day he dies.

But here is a celebration, a wild celebration. The beast has killed these two preachers. And the world has a party. Look at verse 10, "And those who dwell on the earth," and they're all joining it by satellite, "those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry...get this!...and will send gifts to one another." Hey, here's your present, Happy Dead Witnesses Day. I mean, this is...this is the ultimate Christmas experience. There will be a wild party. Now do you see how deep the world has plunged into hellishness? Demons, two hundred million of them, running all over the earth. The pit has belched out bound demons who have been bound for centuries, to join the ones that have been loose. Cataclysms on the earth and in the heaven, the wrath of God, the wrath of Antichrist massacring any and all who oppose him. And in the midst of all these horrors, the devastation of fresh water, salt water, plants, animals, people, in the midst of all of this, what the world is really angry about are two preachers of truth. And when they're dead, the party is on.

Those who dwell on the earth, by the way, is a technical term for the unconverted. It's used twelve times in the book of Revelation. It's a technical term referring to the unbelieving. So the whole world by satellite TV joins the party and they make merry, the literal Greek word means to be of a jolly mind. How can they be happy in that mess? They are happy because these men who confronted them about their sins and iniquities and the judgment of God are dead. Their emotional response certainly parallels their spiritual condition. Amazingly they start giving presents to each other because of the relief.

Verse 10 says, "Because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth." The ungodly rebels, the unrepentant sinners, followers of Antichrist are so sick and so weary of the power of these two that they put on a party like the world has never seen. This has got to be the biggest party the world has ever known. This has got to be the ultimate Mardi Gras. They don't hate Antichrist, they don't hate Satan, they don't even hate the demons destroying them at the same time as much as they hate these two.

So we see their task, their attitude, their identity, their power and their death...now I want you to see their resurrection. I love this. Verse 11, this party doesn't last very long. Verse 11, "After the three and a half days...God understates things, doesn't He?...the breath of life from God came into them

and they stood on their feet." Can you imagine some reporter standing there? He's got a microphone in his hand, and he's standing by the bodies and the camera is rolling and he says, "Well, ladies and gentlemen, they're dead and we're having a worldwide party to celebrate the death of these...they're getting up!! They're up!" The breath of life from God came into them, they stood on their feet right in the middle of the party.

And again, with such understatement, the end of verse 11 says, "And great fear fell upon those who were beholding them." They went into an immediate paralysis. That's putting it mildly. The party, folks, is over. Here they come again. Unimaginable panic, unimaginable fear and they stand on their feet. They're not going to preach again, verse 12 says, "They heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, 'Come up here!' And they went up into heaven in the cloud and their enemies beheld them."

Can you imagine just the panic worldwide as that is replayed on television over and over? They stood up, a voice said, "Come up here," and they just went up. It's a personal two-man Rapture. It is. And I think they'll be smiling as they go.

You say, "Wouldn't that be a perfect opportunity to preach? Why didn't the voice say...Now preach!...and maybe they'll listen? I mean, they've just risen from the dead." Jesus said this in Luke 16, "If they don't believe Moses and the prophets, they won't believe even though someone is raised from the dead."

Signs and wonders don't make the gospel believable. The Holy Spirit does. So they were raised and at the perfect moment when everybody into the signs and wonders concept would say...now preach. They just smiled and left with everybody watching. And God punctuated their little two-man Rapture with what we'll call the impact, verse 13. Here's the punctuation, "And in that hour there was a great...what? and when it says a great earthquake, it means a great earthquake, not just an earthquake, a great one, I mean another one. They've been having them for seven years, basically, and this is another one. "And a tenth of the city fell and seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake."

The term that is used here in the Greek could refer to men of name, or men of note, or leaders, people of distinction. And there are some who believe that it could be an earthquake that devastates all the important buildings that house the leaders of Antichrist's operation and they're all destroyed, it's a very select earthquake in the sense that it kills the right seven thousand people. This may be the devastating destruction of his whole coterie.

And the rest, verse 13, were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven...gave glory to the God of heaven. What does that mean? It's hard to be absolutely dogmatic, but the best approach is to see it, I believe, as the last of the Jews who are then living coming to faith in their Messiah. I believe it is an appropriate point for them finally to fulfill Zechariah, to look on Him whom they have pierced and

mourn for Him as an only son, and for a fountain of blessing and salvation to be opened unto Israel. There it is, in Jerusalem. And certainly the dominant population of Jerusalem is Jewish. It is an appropriate way, I believe, at the end of verse 13 to describe Israel's salvation. I mean, the rest of the world, back in chapter 9 verses 20 and 21, don't repent when the sixth trumpet comes. They're beyond it. They're hard. But here these who were terrified gave glory to the God of heaven. The others refused to do that. They refused to glorify God. And they blasphemed God.

I think the Jews in that moment do what the Gentiles have been asked to do throughout the whole period. In Revelation 14:7 he said with a loud voice to all of the tribes and tongues and nations, "Fear God and give Him glory, fear God and give Him glory." I think that is tantamount to believing, to saving response...fear God and give Him glory. Chapter 16 verse 9, "But the men were scorched with fierce heat, they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues and did not repent so as to give Him glory." You see it. So giving in glory was responding with fear and repentance. I believe then at the end of verse 13 when it says they gave glory to the God of heaven, that was a saving response. They were fearing God, worshiping the true God, repenting of their sin because that is how glory is given to Him...and those references in chapter 14 verse 7 and 16 verse 9. Giving glory to God is an appropriate response. They had heard the preaching of these men for a long time. They had heard the preaching of the hundred and forty-four thousand. The gospel was available to them. Finally in that moment the remaining remnant of Israel, I believe, is described as believing.

If you go back to the gospels in to Luke 17, you certainly remember the cleansing of the ten lepers, only one of them came back. And He says, "Your faith has made you well," literally sozo, your faith has saved you. But He says this in verse 18, "Where are the nine, was no one found who turned back to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And He defines giving glory to God as your faith which has saved you.

In John chapter 9 and verse 24, that same concept of giving glory to God is associated with salvation. A second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God." The Jews were saying to him you need to respond to God in a proper and appropriate way.

In Acts 12, that most remarkable account, verse 23, "Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him...that is Herod...because he didn't give God the glory, he was eaten by worms and died." Giving God glory is the proper worship, the proper response, the proper fear, the proper repentance. And I believe here we can see it as a descriptive of true faith. I believe at this point you have that culmination then of Israel's salvation.

The interlude ends. Verse 14, "The second woe is past, the third woe is coming quickly." The second woe was the sixth trumpet, the first woe the fifth trumpet, the last woe will be the seventh and final trumpet. I believe he's saying Israel will believe. And after that comes the rapid-fire bowl

judgments which compromise the seventh trumpet that make up the end. And then the Lord returns.

We have come then to a climactic point when we see the belief of Israel. In Acts 3, I want you to notice three verses, verses 19, 20 and 21. Acts 3:19 Peter says, "Repent therefore," he's speaking to the Jews, "Repent therefore and return...that is to God...that your sin may be wiped away...then follow...in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus the Messiah appointed for you whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things, about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time."

What is Peter saying? He's saying when you repent and you return to God, the times of refreshing will come, that's the Kingdom, the Messiah will come and He will institute the period of restoration promised in ancient times. IN other words, you repent, the King will come and set up the Kingdom. And I believe what you have indicated in that very subtle little statement at the end of verse 13 of Revelation 11 is the final expression of the faith of the nation Israel. They are regathered, restored, converted. Final judgment comes in rapid succession and the King arrives, destroys the nations of the world and all the ungodly and sets up His Kingdom just as the prophets said.

Now as we come then to the seventh trumpet, we come to the very end. You say, "Why does the book go on and on from there?" Because it recapitulates and goes back and describes the career of Antichrist, describes the one-world church, describes the one-world economy, goes back historically in ways that fill in that seven-year period, and we'll be looking at that in the future. Next time, in a few weeks, we will look at the seventh trumpet that is blown starting in verse 15.

Father, we thank You tonight for this tremendous portion of Scripture which gives us such great confidence and hope in the fact that You are a God who keeps His Word. You made Your promise to Israel and You will indeed fulfill it. We bless Your name for that. We praise You for that. We thank You for this glimpse of the future redemption of Your people who will one day give glory to You as You have pleaded with them to do. Lord, until that day and in the light of things to come, may we be faithful to call many sinners to righteousness. May we be faithful to proclaim the saving gospel that will deliver men from the holocausts in the time of the Tribulation in which many will die, few will reach the end. Father, help us to know that the wrath is on the horizon. We need to be faithful to call men and women to righteousness. We do pray for Your nation Israel, we continue to pray that You will be gracious to them and ultimately You will redeem them as You've promised. And until that great day of redemption that You may continually be gracious to a remnant, even in this age, and bring them to Christ. We thank You that You've given us Your Word which leaves us with such a clear understanding of the past, the present and the future. May we live in the light of it, knowing Your terror to come may we persuade men to come to You, even as the two witnesses will, preaching salvation and deliverance from judgment to come. We thank You for our fellowship again tonight. We commit it all to You in the Savior's name. Amen.

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