

“Sodom and Egypt”

This chapter presents a difficult challenge, so I looked at the commentary of Matthew Poole (amongst others) – only to discover that, in the main, his reflections were very similar to my own! Thus, we both experienced the same difficulty with this chapter.

Whatever interpretation is given to this chapter, we can be left in no doubt that large numbers of people will rise up against true Believers and will kill or harass them. In the past I have said that those professing to be Christians will leave the true fold to join charismatics and ecumenists, and will then fight against (whether this is physical or spiritual, I do not yet know) the remnant, who are the real Church. By comparison, Poole believed that the majority of professing Christians will join with Papists, though he is not able to define what form this opposition will take. Really, I suppose, both of us are correct, for a ‘vote’ for charismaticism and ecumenism is a vote for Rome.

So, as we look at this chapter, remember that it is not easy to interpret or to understand. I have insufficient pride to enable me to be as firm in my interpretation as are those groups who say “Follow me. I know the exact meaning!” Poole refused to be drawn in to an interpretation of details in this chapter, and I follow this example, though perhaps not his entire view of it.

Verses 1&2

1.

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

2.

But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.”

John was given a reed and was told by an angel to measure the temple of God, the altar, and to measure those who worshiped there. Metaphorically, this means to examine them against God’s absolute law and demands, which is our rule today, with no deviations.

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Keeping to generalities, this appears to speak of the inner tabernacle and the inner courtyard. When Herod rebuilt the temple, he built the tabernacle, the courtyard for the Jews, and another courtyard outside it for the Gentiles.

This Gentile courtyard was neither sanctioned nor required by God. So, with brevity, God says John was not to measure those in its confines, but to 'leave out' the Gentiles – here meaning the unsaved or pagans. John was measuring the saints ('them that worship therein') by the word of God (the reed). But, Gentiles, the unsaved pagans, could not thus be measured, because they are not belonging to Him (except as created beings). Indeed, though outwardly interested in the things of God, they will one day rise up and tread them underfoot.

It is my sincere contention that this will occur very soon and will be led by that fifth column, the charismatics and ecumenists (both of whom are Arminians), alongside, or under, the command of, Rome (which is the 'parent-Arminian'). I say this not out of mere speculation, but from observation of what is currently happening and what I believe God has given me to know inwardly, interpreting the signs of the times. The time period for all this is said here to be three and a half years.

As for the temple... it was destroyed under the hand of God, through the Romans, as a judgment against Jewish unbelievers. Why would God rebuild a symbol of Judaism, when His Son cast it, and its religion, aside, and brought in a new form of worship and 'religion'? I therefore cannot apply the measuring to a rebuilt temple of the future. Believers, however are to be measured – this is a continual action to the end of time, because all believers must 'measure-up' to God's standard and commands.

It seems to me that God required John to measure or test the growing Church, to see that it complied with the teachings and requirements of Jesus Christ. Those counted to be 'Gentiles' are the present-day apostates or pretenders-to-Christ, of which there are many.

Verses 3-6

1.

"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth.

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2.

These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

3.

And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

4.

These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.”

God will then give power to His two witnesses. Who are they? Are they really two in number or does ‘two’ symbolically represent more than one, and yet a very small number? It seems that what is meant here is a small number, a remnant. The two witnesses are ***martus*** (from which we get the word ‘martyrs’). That is, they will bear an accurate and true testimony of God, based on a proper, legal representation of God’s word and will, in Jerusalem. They will experience violent death for their faith. I do not mean they will be legalistic. I mean that their testimony will be pure and holy, unlike that of so many in the churches today, who readily mix error with truth.

When Christ comes again, very few in local church congregations will be worthy to be in them – they will be false believers who have no right whatever to sit amongst the righteous. The few who are true will be harassed and persecuted, by atheists and those who are false within the churches... those who are already rejected by God.

We should note that God’s relationship to us is a legal contract, which we must comply with in every detail. This is because a refusal to comply with the details of a contract constitute a breach, which can lead to voiding of the contract, legal restitution, or punishment.

This will occur in the final last days, when the witness of true Believers will so incense professing pseudo-Christians, they will hit out at them with immense force and ferocity (2013

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note: See how homosexuals, Muslims and governments are doing this to us today). Some true Believers may even die. This has occurred time and again throughout the ages – only God's mercy has kept such martyrdom away from Western Christians thus far.

The two witnesses (who have been given names by some and a variety of definitions by others), whether they are really two, or several, or many, will speak to the world in prophecy for 1,260 days, 'clothed in sackcloth'. (It is my view they will be only two).

As *martus* means to give a proper and accurate picture, the text seems to be telling us that in days of darkest apostasy and feigned Christianity, a small core of true Believers will shine through, teaching God's word faithfully, until they will cause the false ones to hit out at them in hatred. Only two of these will stand in Jerusalem proclaiming God's word boldly. We had a small taste of this hatred during the initial evil days of the Toronto Blessing, which barely kept its wickedness covered from the world, but which all discerning Christians saw and experienced.

This hatred is simmering under the surface of charismaticism, even moreso than in Romanism, for Romanism does not claim to be anything other than its own servant. Charismaticism claims to be what it is not, and hates anyone who sheds light on its evil. This is to be expected, because charismaticism is an indirect expression of Romanism (through its Arminianism, which was cleverly developed by Rome by Jesuits).

However, both will join together soon to try to obliterate true faith, and its outward working, Christianity. This has been the case for a long time in fully-Papist countries, and it will transfer its power to the West when the time is ripe. It is worth pointing out that Rome has declared itself to be 'Roman Catholic and not Christian').

The 'two witnesses' then, could be simply the witness of all who are faithful ('all' being an irony, because when these days come very few will be left standing!), though the language appears to point to just two men. In scripture, two witnesses are required if legal proof be known for a certainty (e.g. in the case, say, of murder, there must be two eye witnesses as a minimum requirement for the death penalty). It is obvious to me that to be faithful witnesses, they must concur in what they believe and say. Hence my own desire to see every true Christian equipped with the truth of God as it is written, and not as we presently see it, as a side-product of denominational or theoretic theology, which divide biblical truth into so many fractured parts, with little to unify them.

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Is there significance in the time period of 1,260 days, which is just under three and a half years? Possibly (though there many who insist they know the answer, from conjecture! We cannot fully know, because there is no true way to interpret them). They appear to be just a factual and accurate statement of time. I do not link this time scale, nor the one above, to any fanciful theory held by Dispensationalist theology.

It is possible, but cannot be proven, that each day means a year. If we take the months here to mean Hebrew months, then the 42 months and the 1,260 days are exactly the same lengths of time – three and a half years each, or, in God's 'days', 1,260 years. But, as I have said, this is not proven. Far better to look at them both as periods of time with certain activities present. Poole suggests that the theories fix these times to end in about the mid 1800's, which, incidentally, coincide with the production of alien and godless Bible versions! Does this mean anything? Not necessarily.

The witnesses are clothed in sackcloth because they are intensely aware of the momentous time they are going through, and of the grave truths they are portraying. They are repentant of their own sins and need for forgiveness and so do not preach of pride or superiority, but of humility and grace as a last warning to all who reject God and His word, including those who falsely profess salvation or church membership. Such a warning is already going out, from the few to the many, in advance of these dark days, but hardly anyone listens.

The true witnesses will prophesy. (Note how this follows Zechariah 4:2). In the final last days we are told that false prophets will do many wonders and will prophesy many things that will appear to occur. Even now we are waiting for the first appearance of 'Christ' at charismatic meetings, as falsely prophesied by their own kind. These will herald the beginning of the end, and the coming of mighty wonders worked through charismatics by Satan and his demonic hosts. The Toronto Blessing was merely a 'taster' of things to come.

At the same time, so it seems, true witnesses will prophesy in both senses of the word – they will teach the truth as found in scripture alone, and they will also foretell the *genuine* future of the Church and things allied to its existence. Some of this is already happening.

The 'two witnesses' are represented by two olive trees and two candlesticks, 'before the God of the earth'. Olive trees usually speak of plenty and candlesticks speak of light. As two have been

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determined to be enough to be true witnesses, perhaps this figure means that those who will witness to God's truth in the final last days will pour out truth and will be the light that cannot be hidden under a bushel, and will stand before the God Creator as His faithful servants, alone amongst countless fake believers. I know that this does not reflect the theories known to date, but that is how I see the meanings. It is likely that John was being shown two olive trees and two candlesticks in his vision and was then told what they meant, as was done previously with other symbols, but we are not given these details.

Then we come to something spectacular, for the faithful witnesses will be attacked but will respond with their own declarations of God's power, before being killed. This will consist of God acting through them to produce miraculous statements of divine power. Those who do them harm, or treat them unjustly, will know God's wrath, through the witnesses, who will speak with such intensity, truth and power, that their words will crush the arguments of the wicked.

Furthermore, alongside this manifestation of Gospel power will be the ability to bring a curse upon those who attack them. They will be able to stop the rain and produce a drought with its attendant loss of food and well being. They will be able to make the water undrinkable and will bring plagues or devastating physical punishments upon those who so falsely accuse and attack them. This they will be able to do 'as often as they wish'. Thus, the people of God, who will be relatively few, will not simply be attacked and crushed – they will be able to withstand and use the great power of God to show God's authority over all people, and as a sign of the truth being spoken by the witnesses.

I believe that such power is already with us in some measure and can be portrayed by all faithful servants of God today, in their very words. We have the power of God in the word, as well as in the visitation of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Personally, I have stood against demons inhabiting people, and saw that the fear of God was their lot, as the demons shrank from me, expressing their fear and anxiety at God's power being manifested through me. This was said to me in words as well as in actions, where the people affected crawled on their bellies before me into dark corners or away from my presence, pleading with me for mercy. Not because of my own power, but because of the power of God acting through me at that time, striking the demons with a force and authority they could not possibly withstand.

This same power I have come across in my own life whilst preaching on occasions, with many

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outward signs of that power. This power extends itself to the act of writing, too. So, I believe that these things will be given by God in abundance at the time spoken of in this text. At the same time, charismatic, ecumenical and Romish powers (and possibly those of other pagan cults) will mass together to oppose true Believers with anything they can muster as ammunition, including displays of demonic powers hitherto unseen at any time in the world's history, siding with wicked rulers, and defying God's word as written.

Christians must remember the promises given to us, that if we ask anything in God's name we will get it. If we ask for a mountain to be moved (that is, a great request), it will be moved. That promise is with all Believers in all ages, yet we see precious little of it, because few appropriate the power for themselves. So, pagan cultists, such as charismatics, whose power is demonic, appear to have the rule! This ought not to be, for the promise of this real divine power is for us, not them. It is now time for true Believers to show the power already given to them, especially in the preaching of truth.

Verses 7

1.

“And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.”

But, this period of true Believers' power will have repercussions, for the beast (or vengeful demonic forces acting through wicked men; perhaps the last antichrist) will not allow this to continue, but will gather momentum. God, however, will have His way, and will enable the faithful to preach truth until He decides time is over for the wicked. He will then allow the 'beast' to hold sway and to overcome the faithful witnesses. This seems remarkably like the times we now live in, where even the authorities despise and hate Christian witness.

Not only will the words of the faithful witnesses be struck down, but so also will their bodies, as pagans put them to death or into prisons. As we have already noted elsewhere, this behaviour has been with the world for a very long time, and can presently be seen in any country that is not at least nominally Christian. It was seen in vast proportion in Soviet Russia, China, and Romanist Europe, and can be seen in Romanist countries such as Mexico and parts of Africa. Muslim powers, too, help in this destruction of Christians and their witness. This will all intensify as time draws to its close. (2013 note: This intense hatred has shown itself suddenly since I first wrote this study, and is intense, growing rapidly).

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Verses 8-10

1.

“And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

2.

And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

3.

And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.”

Will the faithful witnesses actually be killed, physically? I have no doubt they will suffer this vengeance of Satan. This statement, that their bodies will be left in the streets, can also apply to the word of God that they preached... it will be left to fester and rot, neglected, as the wicked ones strut the earth thinking they have freedom at last from all godly restraints. (2013 note: Is this not what we are seeing today?)

This will occur in Jerusalem ('the great city'), which by this time will be so far from God's truth as to be likened spiritually to Sodom or Egypt. These names tell us how God will think of Jerusalem, or, the city of the faithful, at that time in history. Normally, we could say that 'Jerusalem' stands for our spiritual estate, but here the text refers to the actual Jerusalem, by the qualification: "where also our Lord was crucified". This being so, we might have to acknowledge that perhaps, after all, the term 'two prophets' actually means two individuals. (This, as I have said, is my view, and their appearance on the streets of Jerusalem will be accompanied by dramatic and never-seen-before spiritual and physical signs).

Some today are aligning verses 9 and 10 with what happened in New York on September 11th, when, after the foul deed, Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere, made merry and showed utter delight at the murder of so many innocent victims. But, this is a false theory, for the text here speaks so clearly of something different. It is possible, of course, that Muslims and others

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might laugh at the demise of God's true emissaries, but the recent atrocities are not part of this text, though they might possibly precede them. (2013 note: Muslim hatred and violence against Christians has grown dramatically, and is allowed freedom to act. Note the evils coming from Egypt today – the same evils portrayed in these texts: Egypt stands for idolatry and tyranny; Sodom for vile horrific sin). It can easily be accepted that hateful Muslims will allow dead bodies to lay in the street, as a symbol of their power and loathing.

The main point is that all who are wicked and who reject God and His truth, will take delight in the fact that the faithful preachers of God have been killed and so God's word removed from their hearing. Are these 'days' real days or years? I do not know. (2013 Note: See how rapid is the decline in the West? We are seeing a vast movement of Satan trying to eliminate God's word and people, and everything is happening at a speed hitherto unthought of. Therefore, it is not a theory that collapse of decency, morality and truth, can occur very fast).

The prophets 'tormented' the wicked people. That is, they vexed them and tested them against God's own measure, and they failed. Thus, as happens so often, the wicked want to be rid of what shows them up in their true light. Now, they were dead and gone and they rejoiced!

Verses 11-13

1.

"And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

2.

And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

3.

And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."

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These prophets lay dead and so the wicked went on as before, sure in their knowledge that they had won. But had they? After three and a half days (or years??) God brought the prophets alive again and they stood where once they had lain, uncovered and unburied. Those who saw it happen were frightened out of their wits. As they stood in awe and trembling with fear, they heard a loud voice from heaven say to the two prophets, "Come up here!" The prophets rose in the air in the middle of a cloud as their enemies watched trembling. (2013 note: This may be figurative for the spiritually-dead, fearful or nominal believers, who at last gain courage and stand up for the Lord. Their courage and spiritual power would be a blow to those who opposed them, and will frighten them).

At the same time, just as had happened at the time of Jesus' death, there was a massive earthquake and a tenth of Jerusalem was destroyed, along with 7,000 people. This, happening as it did, at the time the prophets were made alive and ascended into heaven, brought the people to their knees and they glorified and praised God. We are not told that this in itself brought them to repentance. It may be the case that they were scared as were the Philistines when God's power was manifested against them. They thought of God as being just one of many gods, and simply more powerful. They glorified God more as a fearful respect for a powerful god, than as a true respect and godly fear of the Creator.

Verses 14-19

1.

"The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

2.

And the seventh angel sounded, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

3.

And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God, on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

4.

Saying, We give thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

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5.

And the nations were angry and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

6.

And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”

And so the ‘second woe is past’. It was a time when God gave a true witness to the wicked, but they finally killed the heralds of God, just as Jesus was killed. However, in the midst of their rejoicings, God struck terror into their hearts and they acknowledged God’s power. Very quickly after this woe came a third...

The seventh angel blew his trumpet and great voices boomed in heaven... ‘great’ meaning very loud and powerful, for all to hear. They declared, unequivocally, that all the world was now subject totally to God, Whom they despised and rejected. The full reign of Christ was thus initiated and was to remain for ever. (This has nothing to do with a supposed ‘millennium’, which is a fanciful myth).

On hearing this, the 24 elders before God’s throne got off their seats and paid reverence to God, falling flat on their faces (in holy fashion, not backwards as happens in unholy charismatic meetings!). They thanked God Almighty, Whom they said has always existed, for taking full control at last over a fallen world. But, despite what they had seen and heard, the people of earth became even more bitter and hateful! Is this not how we observe the wicked? When they are told they are wrong, they increase their wickedness in spite and anger, even if they perceive God to be punishing them.

But, to no avail, for the ‘time of the dead’ had come. That is, judgment day. On that day God would reward all His faithful, those who are saved, as well as the prophets who were killed. God would at last display His mighty wrath against all who acted and thought wickedly, whether they

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were famed for their acts of defiance, or their rejection of God was secret. All will be destroyed – along with any possibility of turning to God.

Then, God will open the Heavenly temple, amidst thundering and lightning, where the Ark is kept. This is the ark containing His promises of Heaven to Believers, and shows that though the original Ark of the Covenant was lost, the Ark of Promise can never be lost, for it has an Heavenly abode. There was also an earthquake and huge hailstones, battering the defiant people of earth. Only Satanic influence and delusion can explain why people can remain defiant in the face of Almighty God! (Note: There will not be another earthly temple, at least not built by God. Such is a fallacy of unbelievers, Jews and charismatics).

This study is only a very broad sweep of the facts given in scripture. I detect many layers and facets of truth in these verses, but we must suffice with this introduction for now. Some have asked me if Believers will be present on earth when all these troubles come. The evidence says that they will still be here.

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