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<b>Topic</b>	
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<b>Speaker</b>	Dr Peter Ng

Good evening. Welcome back to our Gamma series. This is study 10. We're going to be looking at Revelations chapter 10 and 11, two chapters in a row. And so let's start with a word of prayer. Lord, we ask, O Lord that you help us understand and take in indeed these two chapters, which are not easy today, help us understand the symbols and what they mean that they may refresh our faith, for you ask for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Right. Let's look back at what's happening. So we've got a whole scheme of Revelations in front of us here. We are now up to the seven trumpets and Revelations 8 to about 11:19. And, we've gone to trumpets one to four, trumpets five to six in Revelations 9 that today we're going to be looking at the angel with the scroll, Revelations 10 and also the two witnesses in Revelations 11 and the final trumpet we'll do probably the next session as well, because there isn't going to be enough time.

So if you look at chapter 10 today, we've got the angel with a scroll versus 1 to 4 and then the prophetic symbolism of eating the scroll and then chapter 11 we have got measuring the temple and the worshipers. And then this symbol of the two witnesses.

Let's start off with the angel, with the scroll.

1 Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. 2 He had a little scroll open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, 3 and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring. When he called out, the seven thunders sounded.

Now this is an angel. Some people have speculated this must be Jesus and the reason why they think is Jesus is that he comes wrapped in the cloud, which is a sign of divinity, rainbow over his head. Remember Revelations chapter 4, God has a rainbow over his head, face like the sun, like son of man which describes Jesus in chapter one of Revelations, legs like pillars of fire or burnish bronze as in Revelations Chapter one and a voice like the lion. Jesus is the lion, but is this Jesus? No, it can't be because John specifically writes it is called an angel and the other things is that he swears by God, the creator. If he swears by God creator, which means he is the creation. So it's probably not.

So what happens is that this is an angel, it is an mighty angel, an angel with much authority, which is why he is described in such a superlative ways and the other things that he's got this authority. He has a little scroll, open his hand, he's put his right foot on the sea and a left foot on the land showing that he's got dominion over both land and sea.

4 And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write (which means some revelation was sound out), but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down."

Which means there is nondisclosure. Was they some special kind of judgments or revelation, no disclosure was made, which means there are certain things that God doesn't necessarily disclose to us.

And sometimes we try to jump the gun. This is Harold Camping, very famous, a chap who fancies himself as an expert in eschatology the last time. So he predicted that the second coming of Christ would be on the September 6, 1994. Then he changed the date to September 29 and change the date to October 2. And then he went on made Oct 21 2011 and finally another date in October 2011. And years later on, he actually made a confession on March, 2012.

*He stated that his attempt to predict a date was "sinful", and that his critics had been right in emphasizing the words of Matthew 24:36 off that day and hour knoweth no man".*

So not everything revealed to us and we actually want to know the unknown. The reason why we want to know the unknown for all of us is that uncertainty, and we want to have power over our fears. So therefore, even before example, election, we want to look at a polls to see whether we can predict the future. We look in the crystal ball look at the horoscopes. Why? Because we have got uncertainty. We want to control the future.

Prophecy provides us, not like a Waze application on your handphone that tells you exactly where to turn, but it provides you a rough trajectory of where history is going. For example, the lion of Judah predicted in Genesis chapter 49, and then the shoot of Jesse in Isaiah 11 and Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. That's in Micah. It gives you a rough direction of where history is going, but the fill in the gaps we need to trust God in that.

Now the next one is that

**5 And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven 6 and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay, 7 but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.**

So the mystery of God will be fulfilled, and this is a mystery that has been announced through prophets and finally it coincides with the seven trumpets.

### **Now what is this mystery?**

If you look in our understanding of mystery, the Cambridge dictionary says. Mystery is something strange, not known, had not be explained or understood. It is something like a detective novel. Here we have the Stonehenge. We don't know why the ancient people put the stones in this particular configuration, was this astrological monument. What about the lines in the sand or Nazca Indians in Peru. These are mysteries which you really absolutely can understand, but in the Bible when the word musterion, which is basically the Greek word for mystery is actually mentioned. It is something that is previously hidden, but now revealed, not necessarily you cannot understand, it's previously hidden, which means most often it refers to the gospel. The gospel of how God saved us through Jesus Christ.

### **What was expected?**

Go back into Jewish history. You go back into the Old Testament as the Messiah that would come. So therefore we got direct prophecies of Messiah will come from the tribe of Judah, son of man who get the eternal kingdom, Daniel 7 and then the Messiah was born in Bethlehem. This direct prophecies of the Messiah coming and this Jesus would be the Lion King, but what is not known is how was he going to relief us, take our penalty of sin, emancipate us from enslavement to sin that was not known. And what is actually shown when Jesus came was that Jesus' death is the victory and fulfillment of the gospel. It was not known before, but when Jesus came it was finally revealed that it was through his death that

paid for all sin, that won our release from the slavery of sin.

So then you look back retrospectively there's direct prophecies, which are seen, but what was unseen was this whole other trajectory in history where God actually laid clues in the sand and these clues were the Ram in the Bush. When Abraham was going to sacrifice Isaac, instead of sacrificing Isaac, God provided a Ram. The Passover lamb, which blood on the doorway protected the first bond of Israel. Then you've got the bronze up and which you look up and you can see a bronze serpent that will save you from your basically illness from snake bites and then you've got the tabernacle sacrifices, temple sacrifices, the lamb being killed as a sacrifice for sin. In retrospect, all these are models or types of what the Messiah would do for us that Messiah would be the sacrificial lamb.

So therefore, the gospel is about Jesus being the King, the Lion King as well as the Lamb. So therefore victory comes with persecution and death of the witnessing churches is the voice. The victory is basically the fulfillment of the gospel, when the church is willing to die for their faith. So here you have the gospel, is both salvation and judgment and it says,

7 but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled,

And so therefore, the gospel is like a two-edged sword. On one hand, it brings salvation to those who repent. On the other hand, it will bring judgment to those who do not repent. So therefore the time of the fulfillment of this gospel of this sword for both salvation for the saints and death and judgment for those who unbelief is about to be fulfilled.

So the next section is eating the scroll.

8 Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." 9 So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to me, "Take and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." 10 And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. It was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. 11 And I was told, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings."

**What's the deal with eating the scroll?**

Well, if you look back in the Old Testament, you can see Jeremiah. Same thing was given to him, and it said,

Jeremiah 15:16, Your words (which is word of God) were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and a delight of my heart,

**Why did Jeremiah find the word which God gave him to bring joy and delight?**

Because he is called by,

I am called by your name O Lord God of hosts,

Which means Jeremiah found God's word sweet, is bring wonder, hope, joy, delight and peace simply because he is called by God, is our response. So therefore, when a Christian actually hears the word of God, the response is wonder, hope, joy, delight, and peace, because the word of God must be sweet to you. And if it's not, and is was boring and you are uninterested I really doubt if we have got the right

transformation, are we actually called by God? And then look at the second part of what Jeremiah writes.

17 I did not sit in the company of revelers, nor did I rejoice; I sat alone, because your hand was upon me, for you had filled me with indignation. 18 Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will you be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail?

So on one hand the word of God was sweet, brought peace. On the other hand, it caused something to happen. He didn't like to sit with people who basically party, nor did he rejoice with the people who basically in sin,

I sat alone, because your hand was upon me, for you had filled me with indignation. 18 Why is my pain unceasing,

Which means when he took the word of God, it brought sweetness, wonder, hope, joy, delight, inner peace. But when he actually ate the word of God, he basically has an awareness of sin in his self as well as others. And he is transformed me. He has guilt because of his sin. Judgment is impending. He mourns the indignation because he see the sins of others. There is revulsion peace. He has been transforming how he looks at other things and is heaviness in his heart. So basically the word of God has this two-fold effectiveness. It is sweet on one hand. On the other hand, if you actually eat it inside, when it comes to your stomach level, when it come to your gut level and you're the center of your soul, it brings bitterness. If that's the case, the word of God has the appropriate transformation.

The word of God is also something that has words of lamentation and mourning and judgment, which is why it causes bitterness in our mouth. So, are we actually taking God's word? Is it sweet? Is it delightful? Does it cause transformation in our character so that when we actually look at the things of sin, we do not find them exciting or tasteful or that we want them, but it actually fills us with indignation. That means it is a change. The word of God needs to be sweet to our mouth and yet when you take it inside your transforms us and affects us viscerally.

Revelation chapter 11. Now, it is divided in two pots. This is the difficult part. It talks to us about what happens to the church during the time of the all the six trumpets coming on, what's happening to the church. So, the first few verses are basically first two verses will talk about God's temple, God's presence. God's church is cast as his temple being measured. And the second part is all about God's church as his witnesses. All right. Chapter 11, verse 1,

1 Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, "Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, 2 but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.

So what's the deal here? You've got the temple, which in specifically the Holy of Holies, right. Symbol of the presence of God and on the outer court which is basically the corner with gentiles. Here is where believing gentiles would come and they could only come as far as this little bridge here and they could worship here. This is called the outer caught. It in this vision would be trampled, the inner court of the temple is complex itself, it would be measured and basically it would not be trampled. And so this is trampled and not measured, the temple and also the Holy city of Jerusalem. What is measured? The temple, inner temple as well as God's people, worshipers.

**How do you measure worshippers?**

You probably take something that count them, that means you count the worshipers and also the altar.

So basically it is symbolic, right? And so basically he is telling us, there is a part of God's people who are protected or measured and the part of God's people who are persecuted, which is basically not measured and trampled. It can't be the literal temple. People are believing that if you actually measure a temple, which you're going to measuring clothes, you're going to make the clothes. So you got to have a literal temple come back. It can't be interpreted as God is preparing a literal temple, because it will mean a revival of the Old Testament sacrificial system, because why would you have a temple? You have a temple so that you could worship there, before you worship you have to offer sacrifices and actually how can you actually measure people.

Now if you look in the Old Testament and the old covenant and the new covenant, there is a difference. The difference is Jesus Christ. Let me read to you Hebrews. Hebrews says,

11 And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

Which means in the old covenant as you come and offer these sacrifices, they don't actually take away any sin,

12 But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. 14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

Which means which a single offering Christ's sacrifice takes away the slavery of sin and the judgement of sin. That's a one-time. 2 Cor chapter 5:21 says,

For our sake he made him to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

So therefore our righteousness resides in Jesus Christ. So, we don't need a temple coming back. We don't need a place where more sacrifices would be made, because if that was the case then it would basically negate all the work that what Jesus has done for us. So here we have the court of the gentiles and inner courts. There will be spiritual protection for the church, but there will also be persecution by the gentiles.

So measuring the temple means God allows persecution for the church, but also spiritually protects it. And for how long? 42 months. 42 months is equal to 1260 days, three and a half years, time, time and half the time. This is a symbol of the time of tribulation. Why does John use this particular symbol, 42 months, three and a half years? Well, historically it is due to the Maccabean Revolt. In 167 BC to 164 BC, about three and a half years roughly. At that time, Israel was being ruled by the Seleucids, which were basically ex-Greek generals under Alexander and what they did, was this particularly vicious ruler called Antiochus Epiphanes. What he did was he established idols everywhere. Even in the temple complexes he forbade the reading of the Torah, he forbade the Jews from practicing their religion and he would send his envoys to all the towns to make sure that the Jews offered sacrifices to idols which was terrible.

And it's why he did he went to a particular town called Modin and the forced one of his soldiers forced the chief priest there called Matanaya to actually offer sacrifices. He refused and another Jew stepped up in the space to offer sacrifices to the idol and when he did that, what Matanaya did was he took his sword and he killed that Greek soldier. He killed the soldier of Antiochus Epiphanes and started a revolt, and this revolt was successful. It lasted for three and a half years. And every time you talk about the Maccabean Revolt, you remember this time, three and a half years in the culture and history of

Israel.

Now we talk about three and a half years it means nothing to us. If you talk to a Malaysian, you talk to him about May 13. Now you talk to him May 13. Everybody understands May 13. You actually, I can remember exact time May 13 what happened? I was sitting in the bus on the way out, back, riding home from school. So to us, if you talk about May 13, we understand, but for the Jews you would talk about three and a half years, they understood this as a short time which they actually had a successful revolution.

So this 42 months is the last days, which start from the coming of Jesus to the second coming of Jesus, which is the period of which we are now going through this period of tribulation. Now, after we are being measured John tells us a vision for two witnesses.

### **What's the deal with the two witnesses?**

Well, here you have the court. There is part of the people of God who are being protected and the part of people who are being persecuted. And the question is how could you be protected and persecuted at the same time? That's a part that's for many people is hard to understand. Just for example, the COVID crisis, we've got this one dimensional view of protection. So a lot of pastors coming up and they say, Oh, you know, don't worry. You can go to church. It doesn't matter, you know, whether you might wear a mask or not, because you will be protected.

Why and why? Because the quote, Psalm 91,

**Because you have made the Lord, your God, your dwelling place – the most high, who is my refuge – no evil is allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.**

So therefore the COVID-19 virus will not come near to your tent. So therefore by faith you go to church and you don't have to follow all the rules and regulations, but this is a one dimensional view of protection. Is that how protection actually works? You've got a crisis here. You've got a tension. The tension is that John is telling us we are both protected and we are also persecuted and saved.

**How could you be protected and persecuted at the same time? What does that mean? How does it mean when this judgement that falls on the earth and on good, bad and ugly and yet we are sealed?**

You see there is this tension, we don't seem to understand it. If we protect it, we shouldn't be persecuted. If we are persecuted, we shouldn't be protected. Correct. So, it is explained in terms of the mission of the church. And so therefore there's this vision of the two witnesses. Let me explain how this tension is resolved.

**3 And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.”**

Again 1260 days, 42 months, three and a half years, is that period of time from the time of coming of Jesus first and second coming of Jesus and sackcloth is a clothing of repentance, so they are calling people for repentance. There are two prophets coming.

**4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.**

So here is the clue, it says there are two witnesses. I will grant authority to my two witnesses. They're going to be prophesying for the 1260 days, dressed in sackcloth that is number one. And who are these?

#### 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

It says, these is equal to this. So therefore this is obviously symbolic, isn't it? It's a mixed metaphor. You could be two witnesses, you also can be two glow live tree, and you also can be two lampstands. It is a language of symbolism when you read. For example, these are, so therefore the two witnesses are two olive trees and are two lampstands. It is doesn't when Jesus said, this is my body he points to this, has Jesus come into the bread or bread becomes Jesus. No, it's a language of symbolism. All right. Let me take you back to where this symbol comes from. When you talk about two olive trees and the lampstand, it comes from a period where the people have just come back from the fall of Jerusalem. They've been exiled to Babylon for years and years and years, and finally they are coming back to rebuild the temple, to rebuild the symbol of God's presence and return is to build this second temple. And there's a lot of opposition to the rebuilding of this temple and resuming of their religious life.

It is in the presence of this, where you actually have a vision given to Zechariah in Zechariah chapter 4. If you've got time, please go and read it, it is most important. Now there's a vision of two olive trees and then the vision of a lampstand and when Zechariah asked, what's the deal with the two olive trees and the two lampstands, the answer is given,

**Zechariah 4:6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit says the Lord.**

So basically what the Lord is telling them during that particular time, there are two particular leaders called Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel the governor. God is going to use them and empower them, give them the spirit, just like the olive provides olive trees to the lampstands so that they will complete the temple, because the temple will be the witness to the presence of God in the return land of Israel when Israel comes back from Babylonian exile to Israel. God will use them to rebuild the temple in the face of persecution. That's what happened in Zechariah chapter four.

Now, if you've come to Revelations, you've got a slight change in the metaphor. There are two lampstands.

#### **What does the lampstand represent?**

The lampstands represent the church because in Revelations 1:20...the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands stand for the seven churches.

In the New Testament church also has a prophetic ministry. **I will pour out my spirit on all flesh and your sons and daughters shall prophesy.** So what he is saying is that, the two witnesses are there to two fellas walking around or do these two fellows who are basically prophets represent the witnessing church. God's spirit is going to enable his church to rebuild his temple or his presence in the world basically. That's what it means. Now look at the ministry of the two witnesses or the ministry of the church, and we can learn about seven or eight things. All right, which are very important to us.

First of all, the church, like the two witnesses will be eternally secure in the presence of God. Here you have,

**3 And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth." 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.**

Which means when you actually go out and share the gospel and live out the gospel among the community, we are actually in the absolute presence of God. So we are secure, because he knows where we are, no matter what part of the world that we are at. So we are protected remeasured in that sense.

Then however, you can be harmed. You can be harmed, but there are consequences.

5 And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed.

So here is a paradox, although they are secure in the presence of God, but they are persecuted. So they are like the part of the temple that is not measured, that is not protected it as it were. And if you look at history, the church does suffer harm, time and time again after Jesus has gone and ascended almost all his apostles were actually martyred and we see the church suffering harm even to this day, but there's a difference. This is the account of a The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity. Perpetua is a noble woman who has come to know Christ and her slave is called Felicitas. And what happen is that she has a baby, a newly wean baby and she was being brought up on charges that she's a Christian, she has to deny Christ and worship the emperor. And she refused to do that. Here's a picture of the father begging Perpetua, please renounce Christ, just offer the sacrifice and then you can be saved.

This happened 200 years after Christ. Perpetua refused and then she was brought to the gladiatorial stadium the next day where animals will maul her and she'll be finally killed, but just before that happens, yet, she had a dream and a dream was she saw a bronze ladder, very tiny ladder from heaven coming all the way down and the side fill of spikes and right to the bottom of this bronze ladder, you know what it was, it was a serpent, it was Satan himself. And she saw herself approach the ladder and you know what? The first step was too high. You know what the devil did, the devil put his head underneath the ladder, so she stepped on his head and climbed the ladder all the way to heaven. It's a beautiful picture of the victory over Satan, because in her death she achieved victory. So therefore we are not to be afraid. So in a sense, she is protected, measured as well as persecuted.

They can be harmed, but there are consequences. God holds them accountable.

5 And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed.

Here is how God protects his people. All right, Jeremiah 5:14

Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of hosts: "Because you have spoken this word, behold, I am making my words in your mouth of fire, and the people wood, and the fire shall consume them.

He's not literally saying when the prophets speak, the preacher speaks, everything gets burned up. He's saying that the words will have the same effect as fire, the people will be burned up by God's judgment. So legal pronouncement of judgment is based on the rejection of those witnesses. Thirdly, they come with the authority and power of God.

6 They have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire.

So these prophets or the church comes with the power to shut the sky and it actually happened, and this is how they protect it and measure it. It was a story told by DA Carson of basically one of his



lectures, many, many years ago, who was actually this first assignment sent out to the Outback. It was a church in the outback of Australia, I don't know which town it is, but it was a difficult ministry, small church, and it had a lot of difficulties when he was preaching the gospel, nobody really responded. The leadership was full of embezzlement of money. There was sexual immoral, there was adultery, all sorts of things going on and he ministered there for three years and actually got no way until one day for three months he would lie prostrate on the ground and he will complain to the Lord, Lord, you send me the wrong place. I'm not strong enough to do this. I can only put up with this for another few more weeks, please send somebody else instead of me. And as he prayed and prayed and prayed, you know what happened in the next three months, 34 people died. 34 funerals. That's a record for any small town in Outback of Australia. And the following year, there were 200 baptisms.

See the witness of the church is not without the authority and power of God. The power of God is seen in ancient prophets. If you can see Moses, he turned water into blood. Elijah shut up the heavens causing drought. The Corinthian church took the Lord Supper flippantly without recognizing the unity of the body. Many of them died because they disrespected the Lord Supper. Ananias and Sapphira thought they would cheat the church, declaring that they have given all that proceeds from the sale of the house as tithe, but actually they gave only half and they died on the spot. Now they are protected and eternally secure for their mission. In verse 7

**7 And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them,**

So here they are protected and eternally secure for their mission. So all of us are protected in the sense that we have a mission to finish. We have to finish our testimony and God will make sure we finish our testimony. This is a very famous story of Jim Elliot. Along with five others in 1956 he went to a minister to Alka Indians in South America. He was there for about three years and then on November 8, 1956, he landed in the plane to these very fierce Alka Indians who actually witnessed to them, before they could even witness the spears came and killed him and four others. They didn't live very long. They were protected but yet persecuted, they only lived for few minutes, two minutes it took the spears to come and they were killed. But his testimony of his bravery and courage and willingness to die for the gospel inspired many, many more missionaries to go out to the far-flung places of this world to share the gospel.

On the other hand, if you see this other picture holding the picture is Jim Elliott's brother. His name is Bert Elliot. He went back to Peru and he actually witnessed to this Indians for the next 34 years. One brother is killed after two minutes landing the plane and another brother is kept safe by God for 34 years to share the gospel with the Indians. But both have a singular mission, both have a singular mission to witness to the power and glory of God. For one, God used a short ministry to inspire and empower missionaries all over the world. For the second God used him for 34 years. He was indestructible for 34 years and he sat there among the same Indians and he shared the gospel and God allowed him to do that.

So therefore the bottom line is that we are protected and persecuted because of the testimony of the gospel. That is what important is not whether you get the COVID-19 virus or not. That's not how God protects us or why God protects us. He protects us and allow us to be persecuted each differently according to our calling for the sake of the ministry of the gospel. There is a place in Punjab. They actually got huge numbers of Christians and that's a historical fact. There was a untouchable man by name of Dit, surname Dit, who was basically a dealer in animal hides. He came from the tribe of the Chorays people. In 1873 he actually came to know Jesus Christ through the sharing of gospel from someone around his neighborhood. And he insisted that he got baptized. When you got baptized by a

Presbyterian minister called Samuel Martin, he insisted on going back to his village. Samuel said, no you'll be ostracized by our village. You stay with me. I will train you up for several months and then you can go back. He insisted no, I need to take the gospel to my village. And he went back to his village and everybody in his village actually rejected him. These were actually very poor people. They're actually, untouchables. The Chorays are untouchables. Their main occupation is actually go into the sewage tank and take out shit and take out all the rubbish and unclog all the sewage lines.

There are people most shunned by the people of Punjab. And, he went back to the land owner who rented him the land, gave him trouble, they money lenders will not lend them money. His wife would not cook for him, not even sit with him to have a meal, but within three months of persistence and love, witnessing of the gospel, his wife wanted to become Christian, his daughter and two more others. Within three months he brought them to Samuel Martin and they were baptized. Six months later on, another four and you can see in this particular district called the Sialkot District, by 1915, which is about 11 years later on almost everybody in this particular district became a Christian except for a few hundred. And by the time 1930s rolled around 100,000 untouchables of the Choras became Christians.

You see, we don't know how God acts. Sometimes, I mean, Dit by himself brought 500 people to come to know Christ, but through the extension of the ministry, 100,000 people now come to know Christ. Sometimes God uses us in short term, in terms of like Jim Elliot, he only lasted a couple of days after landing from plane. Sometimes he gives you 34 years. Sometimes it works in all sorts of ways, but the mission of the witnessing of the church will always be completed.

Now the fifth thing is that the whole world will witness their defeat.

8 and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. 9 For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb,

So therefore they are so hated that when these two witnesses are killed or defeated, the people actually leave them to rot in the streets. So this is the part where the temple is persecuted and the dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. Here it is just basically a symbolism of, they were killed in every city where people hate our Lord Jesus Christ, because the cities are called Egypt and city is called Sodom. The city is called the Holy city where Jesus is actually persecuted. So these are symbolic representation of the places in the world where the church is apparently defeated. And when the church is defeated,

9 For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, 10 and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents,

When the people of God are persecuted, their enemies will exchange present like Christmas

because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth.

Why are they the torment?

They torment because the church tells you that you can't be in a gay marriage. The church tells you can't do abortion and the church is universally hated because we hold up to the righteousness of God. So therefore, when we're gone they will celebrate. So, this part of the church is actually persecuted, but the church will be vindicated,

11 But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on 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, and their enemies watched them.

Here the church is also vindicated. Here is how the church has protected and measured. You know, when you go up in the cloud like Elijah, Moses and Jesus, ascension means vindication. It shows divine approval. And this idea of resurrected and go up is actually taken from the Old Testament of Ezekiel, where is the valley of dry bones. Ezekiel had a vision and the suddenly the dry bones resurrected and became flesh again. What did that mean? For Ezekiel it meant Israel was an exile and then the reality is Israel is an exile and then Israel is returned. So in this particular vision, the two witnesses die. They are resurrected and ascended to heaven means that the church will be apparently defeated but God himself will vindicate them and give them glory. That's the vision, that's the reality of what is going to happen.

And then there'll be a final recognition of the lordship of Christ.

13 And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. 14 The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.

Here we have at the end when God vindicates his church, the people in the world will finally realize that the church was witnessing to the true God and there will be a final recognition, not them coming to know Christ, it will be unwilling admission of the truth.

Philippians 2:10 So that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow (every single one, whether you like it or not) in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the father.

So 7 points here.

1. The church is protected and yet persecuted.
2. We are eternally secured in the presence of God.
3. We can undergo harm, but God will repay and hold them accountable.
4. The church comes with authority and power of God.
5. The church is protected to finish her mission.
6. The church will seem defeated in the eyes of the world.
7. They will be hated by the world.
8. Ultimately, we will be vindicated by God.

So that's the meaning of how the people of God are both protected and persecuted. May God add a blessing to all of you as you wrestle with his word and meditate on what it means for all of us to be the witnessing church.