

## EP22: Revelation Introduction P2

In our last podcast we addressed the standard **who, what, where, when, and why** this book was written. And with this background we were introduced to the literal approach to figurative language that we must adopt to properly understand **Revelation**.

John was taken up into heaven and He was in the Spirit; thus, he was able to see things from a heavenly perspective, from the view of the Spirit, not the view of the physical or the earthly. **And this perspective is to be our starting point.** This means that all things are identified and described as they exist in the unseen realm and how they are seen in the unseen realm. The information gets transmitted by God through the angelic,<sup>1</sup> and then it unfolds in the physical, or has its impact on the physical. Therefore, we cannot take a ground up approach, from the earthly to the heavenly, rather we must take a top-down approach from the heavenly to the physical realms.

### Days, Months, and Time, Times and Half a Time

With that as our baseline approach, we began to touch on the way the Spirit loves numbers, and He apparently loves riddles. Thus, He utilizes 3 (perfect) descriptions of time, each of which adds up to the same number, 3.5 years (utilizing the Jewish calendar of 360 days). He speaks of 1,260 days, 42 months, and Time, times, and half a time.<sup>2</sup> He also utilizes 1,290 days (counting from the *Abomination of Desolation*) and 1,335 days (counting from the beginning of testimony), the overlap of which is 3.5 months.<sup>3</sup> But are these to be taken literally or figuratively, or both?

#### *The Mysterious & Merciful Prophetic Number: 3.5*

There is something quite mysterious about 3.5 (years/months). Being half of 7 (the number indicating completeness), it seems to indicate a time of *mercy* through a special sort of trial or testing that is cut in half of what it would otherwise be.<sup>4</sup> After all, Jesus said, "*Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect (or Chosen) those days will be cut short.*"<sup>5</sup>

**In God's province, mercy and judgment are intertwined and are surprisingly to be understood synonymously, as His judgment is intended to help people avoid His wrath.** In effect, the Spirit communicates that in judgment He will have mercy on Zion and pity her, so **Yahweh's** fame will be celebrated in Zion.<sup>6</sup> Thus, He declares, "*My mercy and justice are coming soon. My salvation is on the way. My strong arm will bring justice to the nations. All distant lands will look to me and wait in hope for my powerful arm.*"<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Revelation 22:16.** This is akin to how the law was communicated to Moses, from **Yahweh** to an angel(s), to Moses. See **Deuteronomy 33:2; Acts 7:38, 53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2**

<sup>2</sup> Time being 1 year, times (time+time) being 2 years, and half a time being 6 months.

<sup>3</sup> **Daniel 12:11-12**

<sup>4</sup> *Other examples.* Elijah prayed and it did not rain for 3.5 years. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit (**James 5:17-18**); and it is understood that Jesus' ministry lasted 3.5 years.

<sup>5</sup> **Matthew 24:22**

<sup>6</sup> **Psalms 102:13, 21**

<sup>7</sup> **Isaiah 51:5**

It should not surprise us then that all these **End Time** events are contained within this mysterious period of *mercy*: 3.5 years (42 months, 1,260 days, and time, times, and half a time). And we must not ignore the **little hidden jewel of mercy in judgment** which is found in time expressed as a difference between 1,290 and 1,335 days (3.5 months).

Let us consider these numbers within the timeline of grace and the timeline of judgment. We will start with an overarching image of what I will call the “**Time of Grace**” and then dive down into the “**Time of Mercy in Judgment**”.

### Time of Grace

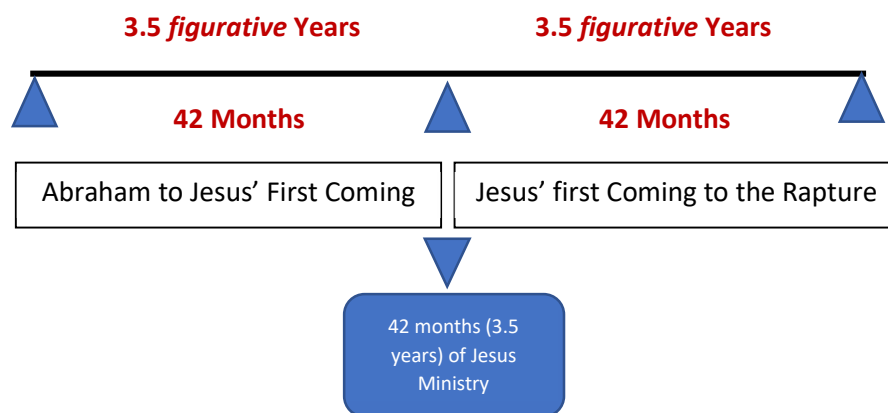
The **Time of Grace** was first introduced to us in the life of Abraham where he was counted righteous simply by believing, by betting his life on the things God has promised him.<sup>8</sup> This is the first instance where we understand God to ascribe righteousness to a man just for believing. And we are sons of Abraham, heirs according to this promise of grace, if we belong to Christ.<sup>9</sup> And from the time of Abraham people have always only been saved by grace through faith, not as a result of anyone’s works, it is a gift of God so that no man may boast.<sup>10</sup> This **Time of Grace** however will come to a conclusion with the rapture of the church, when God calls His bondservants home (those in the grave and those who are alive).

As to this **Time of Grace**, there were 42 periods of times, or generations from Abraham to Jesus (approximately 2,050 years, give-or-take).<sup>11</sup> And we are venturing on that same time-period of 42 periods of time or generations, as it has been over 2,000 years since Jesus’ days on earth.

Perhaps the 42 months (3.5 *figurative* years) before Jesus came to the earth and the 42 months (3.5 *figurative* years) after Jesus came to the earth speak of a bigger picture of 7-*figurative* years to complete the prophetic timeline of grace.<sup>12</sup>

It is also critical to note that Jesus ministered on this earth for 42 months (approximately 3.5 years), during a time of grace upon grace which overlapped these 2 epochs or periods of 42 months.

### Illustration



<sup>8</sup> Romans 4; Galatians 3:6-29

<sup>9</sup> Romans 4:16-25; Galatians 3:6-14

<sup>10</sup> Ephesians 2:8-9

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 1:17. 14+14+14 generations = 42

<sup>12</sup> 7 is the number indicating completeness.

This figurative 7-years, comprised of 2 halves (each figuratively 3.5 years), sets for us a type or a model of what we can expect in the **End Times**. I would suggest that if this typology regarding the **Time of Grace** is true, then we would see a similar picture of *literal* years, months, and days which define the **End Times**. In other words, the timeline of the **End Times** is a microcosm (a small-scale version) of the **Time of Grace**.

### Time of Mercy in Judgment

In like manner, in the **End Times** there will be 3.5 years (literal years) remaining of the **Time of Grace** and then there will occur 3.5 years (literal years) which will be the **Time of Mercy in Judgment**, with a literal 3.5 month overlap between the two periods for the ministry of the witnesses, the bondservants of **Yahweh** who will be dramatically slaughtered, just like Jesus who was led like a lamb to the slaughter at the end of His 3.5-year ministry.

I have included various illustrations to help you get the picture. You can download the transcript with the illustrations, as well as all the footnotes and references (for all podcasts) at [threshermediagroup.com](http://threshermediagroup.com).

## Illustration



### Both Figurative and Literal Expression of Time

As we go through the text of **Revelation**, this mysterious division of time into two 3.5 *figurative* and *literal* time periods will become apparent. But to give you a preview, and to support this supposition, I will give you a few examples.

We are told that the outer court of the temple has been given to the nations, or literally to the peoples.<sup>13</sup> This is a term that functions as a synonym, or **Code**, for the “gentiles,” which in a Jewish way of thinking is a euphemism or **Code** for “unbelievers” (gentiles) as opposed to believers (Jews). That is how they thought.

We see this same use of the **Code** played out in the New Testament when the Spirit connects the idea of “*Israel*” not to those of Jewish lineage or to those who come from Abraham, but to all true believers—those who are children of the promise.<sup>14</sup> The Israel of God are those who share in the New Creation, whether circumcised or uncircumcised.<sup>15</sup> In fact, the Spirit is very specific that His view of “*Israel*” includes the fullness of the gentiles and the remnant of Jews who believe by faith alone according to God’s gracious

<sup>13</sup> In Greek, “*ethnos*”

<sup>14</sup> **Romans 9:6-8**

<sup>15</sup> **Galatians 6:15-16**

choice.<sup>16</sup>

Moreover, the area being addressed in the temple (that is turned over to the “nations”) does not refer to the temple at large, but specifically to the territory outside of the Sanctuary or the Holy Place. Only the priests were allowed to enter the Holy Place, it was set aside for them alone. Whereas others were allowed access (albeit somewhat restricted) to the rest of the temple grounds.

Then we are told that “**they**”, the gentiles—the “unbelievers”—will tread the *Holy City* for 42 months (which is an expression of the mysterious 3.5 years).<sup>17</sup> We will also discover that the “*Holy City*” is **Code** for the true temple of God, represented by the collective of true believers (the bondservants of Jesus Christ) who dwell in the Holy Place and they are also subsequently pictured as the “New Jerusalem”.<sup>18</sup>

### ***What Does This Mean?***

From the time of the Roman occupation through today, the *Holy City*, or the bondservants of Jesus Christ, have been trodden upon by the “gentiles” or the unbelievers as they, the unbelievers, have occupied the temple grounds outside of the Sanctuary. In other words, the persecution of true believers (those who abide in the Sanctuary as priests of God) has come at the hands of those occupying the outer temple – which is a symbol for all those in the religion of Christianity as well as Judaism. Just as Jesus explained, those who persecute and kill His bondservants will believe that they are offering a service for God. And these things they will do because they have not known the Father nor the Son.<sup>19</sup>

For the past 2,000+ years, true believers (the bondservants of Jesus Christ) have been persecuted in every country in the world. And this will continue with a vengeance in the **End Time** as the events culminate in nothing short of a *literal* slaughter of true believers.<sup>20</sup>

So, these **42 months** would seem to overlay the period-of-time from Jesus’ departure from earth up to the current days. Hence, we can be sure that these “42 months” of which the gentiles tread upon the court of the temple has a *figurative* application.

Furthermore, given what we will read about the famed 2 witnesses regarding both their ministry and death,<sup>21</sup> these 42 months will have a *literal* application occurring during a 3.5-month period that overlaps both the first and the second 3.5-year segments of the tribulation. These 2 witnesses are granted authority to prophecy for 1,260 days (the first 3.5 years) and when their testimony is complete, they are killed by the Beast. Yet we are told that the person is blessed who keeps waiting and remains until the end of 1,335 days (a difference of 105-days or 3.5 months based on a 360 day a year Jewish calendar).

I know that is confusing. But let me try again. These 2 witnesses will be present during the first half of the tribulation and for a short time in the second half of the tribulation. There will be a time bridge of 3.5 months that lays over both the first and the second half of the tribulation. And at the end of the 3.5 month time bridge, they will be killed.

<sup>16</sup> See **Romans 11:25-26; Galatians 6:27; Romans 11:1-6**

<sup>17</sup> **Revelation 11:2**

<sup>18</sup> See the **Code: 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 16:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Hebrews 12:22; 1 Peter 2:6; Revelation 21:2, 10, 22:19**

<sup>19</sup> **John 16:2**

<sup>20</sup> **Revelation 11**

<sup>21</sup> **Revelation 11:7-13; 14:1, 12-13**

Similarly, the Beast (the demonic spirit that ascends from the Abyss) is given authority to act for 42 months (the 2<sup>nd</sup> period of 3.5 years in the Tribulation).<sup>22</sup> And we know from the apostle John that the antichrist who is even now coming is even now active in the world (*present* tense) and has been active every moment of the now since John's time.<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, these 42 months must speak *figuratively* of the generations of time during which the Beast exercises his authority from within the Abyss, and literally to the time he is granted to exercise his global authority in the **End Times**.

Moreover, in *Daniel* we are told that from the time the true believers are slaughtered, there will be time, times, and half a time;<sup>24</sup> thus, the 42 months in which the Beast is given authority to act will be a *literal* time, because we know his demise does not come until the end of the second or final 3.5-year period (when the time of wrath is completed<sup>25</sup>) when Jesus comes again.

Over-and-over again, the Spirit will reveal both a *figurative* and a *literal* application of time, even when talking about a singular event. Remember the cake layers, both can be true all at the same time. We will carefully follow the **Code** through its use of the key verb tenses, and this will be our clue to track the figurative and literal application of time.

## Fiction Alert

**FICTION ALERT**

## *The Tribulation, The Great Tribulation, & Wrath*

As I mentioned previously, fictions run amok when it comes to “the **End Times**” such that it is ridiculously hard to shift our mind and emotions from some of these fancy-tales that have been repeated so many times that far too many people now take them as fact when they are mere fiction and fabrications.

Much of the confusion regarding the **End Times** has flowed from the varying positions on the rapture of the church, specifically when it occurs. The rapture itself refers to a time when Jesus Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.<sup>26</sup>

And this issue of the rapture, specifically when it occurs, is at the center of what drives much of the related fiction. And one finds that the positional arguments supporting this fiction tend to be either an emotional manipulation of scripture, a downright twisting, or both.

Depending upon the faction, these **fictions** are likely driven by one or more of the following: i) a lack of understanding of the **Code**; ii) an unwillingness to use, or inconsistent use of, the **Code**, iii) a “follower”

<sup>22</sup> *Revelation 13:5*

<sup>23</sup> *1 John 5:4*

<sup>24</sup> *Daniel 12:7*

<sup>25</sup> *Daniel 22:36-38; Revelation 15:1, 7, 16:1-21*

<sup>26</sup> *1 Thessalonians 4:16-18*

mentality, not wanting to buck the flow of the majority, and iv) a dishonest positional manipulation to serve one's *instinctual religious wisdom*. But whatever the reasons, there is clearly a lot of demonic deception in play as many learned students and well-known teachers of the Bible blatantly compromise the **Code** to support their positional view on the timing of the rapture.

By way of example, the **Codex** states that God has not appointed His bondservants to **wrath**, and being in the *indicative* mood, we know it is a statement of fact, something upon which we can rely.<sup>27</sup> In the same way, Jesus told His bondservants that He will rescue them from the wrath to come.<sup>28</sup>

This begs the question, **what does the Spirit mean by “wrath”**? Almost universally (at least in Western Christianity), teachers summarily conclude that because a lot of bad things happen during the **End Times**, the entire time (both periods of 3.5 years) must be wrath. And so, they pronounce to everyone that the rapture must occur before the **End Times** begin because we are not appointed to wrath. And everybody stands up and shouts, “hallelujah, others will suffer but not me!”

The problem however is that according to the **Codex**, “wrath” is a *defined term*. This means that we do not get to choose its definition, as the **Codex** is extremely specific about this time and when it occurs. To the surprise of many, the time of *wrath* does not apply to the entire **End Times** events, but is found occurring within the last 3.5-year period, during the time of **mercy in Judgment**.

## Tribulation

You might have noticed that I have refrained from utilizing the word “Tribulation” as a general reference to the entire **End Times** events. This has been purposeful as the generic use of this word, as it is propagated within Christian pop-culture, contributes to the confusion around the timing and definition of *defined terms* like the time of *wrath* or the Great Tribulation.

## Fiction Alert

**FICTION ALERT**

**THE “7-YEAR TRIBULATION” IS NEVER USED AS A STAND-ALONE PHRASE  
TO DESCRIBE THE TWO 3.5-YEAR PERIODS OF THE END TIMES**

It might shock you to find that there is no mention of a 7-year tribulation anywhere in the **Codex**, but only of two time periods each of which comprise 3.5-years. You might be thinking I am being overly picky by not just saying the 7-year tribulation, but the events of each period of 3.5-years are awfully specific and the Spirit divided the events of the **End Times** into 2 distinct periods-of-time for a reason, to avoid the confusion and fictions which are caused by generic terms, like equating the time of *wrath* with the tribulation at large. Let us examine this dynamic.

<sup>27</sup> **1 Thessalonians 5:9**, where “us” is those who now and continually believe.

<sup>28</sup> **1 Thessalonians 1:10**

There are 16 references in the New Testament to “tribulation (5 of which are in **Revelation**).”<sup>29</sup> 10 of the 16 references (including 3 in **Revelation**) are about personal suffering, i.e., the tribulation which true believers must endure as part of living in this world. For example, the Spirit exhorts us to “*exult in our tribulations, knowing that our tribulation brings about perseverance.*”<sup>30</sup> We are to “*rejoice in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer.*”<sup>31</sup> And tribulation is assured for the believer as Jesus said: “*In the world you have tribulation, but take courage I have overcome the world.*”<sup>32</sup>

The important thing to note is that there is no time reference in any of these 10 passages that would tie personal suffering exclusively to either of the 3.5-year periods-of-time. Rather, tribulation is a result of being in this world; accordingly, John tells us to not be surprised if the world hates us.<sup>33</sup>

## Great Tribulation

The remaining 6 references are specifically addressing a time which Jesus refers to as **great tribulation**,<sup>34</sup> which we will find is a *defined term* (the “Great Tribulation”); hence, the generic term “tribulation” does not equal Great Tribulation. These are **NOT** synonymous phrases. Therefore, despite modern **End Times** folklore, the “Tribulation” as it is understood in modern culture does not equal the **Great Tribulation**.

The **Codex** gives us the definition of the time of Great Tribulation and a time marker for its occurrence, so we do not confuse it with any other time or event in the Bible. And the key marker is that Great Tribulation does not occur until **AFTER** an event called the *Abomination of Desolation*.<sup>35</sup>

From within the midst of a terrible persecution of God’s people (during that 3.5-month bridge period), there will be a sign, the *Abomination of Desolation*. Then there will come a “*Great Tribulation, a time such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.*”<sup>36</sup> The Great Tribulation is *literally* incomparable to anything the world has ever seen or ever will see.

The **Codex** makes a multitude of references to this incomparable time but uses different titles or expressions. However, to make sure we know the Spirit is talking synonymously about only one event, each reference is tagged with a phrase that similarly marks it as **an unparalleled event in human history, something never before occurring and never to be repeated**. It is this definition that makes the time of Great Tribulation” a *defined term*—since, by definition, there can be only one such time.

These alternate titles or expressions for the “Great Tribulation” are as follows:

- Day of the Lord’s great wrath.
- Time of Indignation.
- The Day of the Lord.

<sup>29</sup> **Matthew 24:9, 21, 29; Mark 13:19, 24; John 16:33; Romans 2:9, 5:3, 8:35, 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; Revelation 1:9, 2:9, 2:10, 2:22, 7:14**

<sup>30</sup> **Romans 5:3**

<sup>31</sup> **Romans 12:12**

<sup>32</sup> **John 16:33**

<sup>33</sup> **1 John 3:13**

<sup>34</sup> **Matthew 24:21**

<sup>35</sup> **Matthew 24:15-22; Mark 13:14-21**

<sup>36</sup> **Matthew 24:21; Mark 13:19**

- The Day of our Lord.
- The time of Jacob's trouble (distress).
- The day of the East wind.
- The day of God.
- In "that day."<sup>37</sup>

Again, these are all synonymous terms with the connecting point being the unparalleled level of terror described—**something which has never occurred before nor ever will again**. So, these titles are simply different ways of expressing the same event. A few other descriptions of this time of terror are:

- Destruction from the Almighty.<sup>38</sup>
- The great day of the Lord and the day of **Yahweh**.
- The day of the Lord's **wrath**; a day of **wrath** is that day.
- A day of trouble and distress; a day of destruction and desolation.
- A day of darkness and gloom; a day of clouds and thick darkness.
- A day of trumpet and battle cry.<sup>39</sup>
- A day of darkness instead of light.<sup>40</sup>
- A time of doom for the nations.<sup>41</sup>
- Cruel with fury and burning anger.<sup>42</sup>

And if that does not sound terrifying enough, let us get even a more precise view of this *figurative* "day" – the time of **Great Tribulation**.

### ***Zephaniah 1:2-3***

"I will completely remove all things from the face of the earth," declares **Yahweh**. "I will remove man and beast; I will remove the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea, and the ruins along with the wicked; and I will cut off man from the face of the earth," declares **Yahweh**.

### ***Zephaniah 1:17-18***

I will bring distress on men so that they will walk like the blind, because they have sinned against **Yahweh**; and their blood will be poured out like dust and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them on the day of **Yahweh's** wrath; and all the earth will be devoured

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<sup>37</sup> **Amos 5:18; Joel 1:15, 2:1, 11, 31, 3:14; Obadiah 15; Zephaniah 1:1-18; Malachi 4:5; Ezekiel 13:5, 30:3; Isaiah 2:10-21, 4:1-2, 13:6, 27:8; Jeremiah 30:1-9; Daniel 9:24-27; Isaiah 27:8; Matthew 24:21; Acts 2:20; 1 Corinthians 1:8, 5:5; 2 Corinthians 1:14; Philippians 1:6, 19; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:2; 2 Peter 3:10, 12**

<sup>38</sup> **Isaiah 13:6; Joel 1:15**

<sup>39</sup> **Zephaniah 1:14-18**

<sup>40</sup> **Joel 2:2**

<sup>41</sup> **Ezekiel 30:3**

<sup>42</sup> **Isaiah 13:9**



in the fire of His jealousy, for **He will make a complete end, indeed a terrifying one, of all the inhabitants of the earth.**

#### ***Jeremiah 30:6-7***

Ask now and see if a male can give birth. Why do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in childbirth? And why have all faces turned pale? Alas! **For that day is great, there is none like it; and it is the time of Jacob's distress,** but he will be saved from it.

#### ***Isaiah 24:1-6***

Behold, **Yahweh** lays the earth waste, devastates it, distorts its surface and scatters its inhabitants. And the people will be like the priest, the servant like his master, the maid like her mistress, the buyer like the seller, the lender like the borrower, the creditor like the debtor. **The earth will be completely laid waste and completely despoiled, for Yahweh has spoken this word.** The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away. The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. **Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty.** Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.

#### ***Isaiah 24:17-23***

Terror and pit and snare confront you, O inhabitant of the earth. Then it will be that he who flees the report of disaster will fall into the pit, and he who climbs out of the pit will be caught in the snare; for the windows above are opened, and the foundations of the earth shake. The earth is broken asunder, the earth is split through, the earth is shaken violently. **The earth reels to and fro like a drunkard and it totters like a shack, for its transgression is heavy upon it, and it will fall, never to rise again.** So, it will happen in that day, that **Yahweh** will punish the host of heaven on high, and the kings of the earth on earth. They will be gathered together like prisoners in the dungeon and will be confined in prison; and after many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed, for **Yahweh Sabaoth** (the Lord of hosts) will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and His glory will be before His elders.

*"There has never been anything like it, nor will there be again after it to the years of many generations."<sup>43</sup> "At that time Michael, the archangel who stands guard over your nation, will arise. Then there will be a time of anguish greater than any since nations first came into existence."<sup>44</sup> "The day of **Yahweh** (the day of the Lord) is indeed great and very awesome, and who can endure it?"<sup>45</sup>*

Accordingly, it is **NOT** accurate to refer to the entire **End Times** (the two 3.5-year periods) as the "Great

<sup>43</sup> **Joel 2:2**

<sup>44</sup> **Daniel 12:1**

<sup>45</sup> **Joel 2:6**

Tribulation.” Thus, the generic reference to “the Tribulation” is not the same as the Great Tribulation—they are **NOT** synonymous. The Tribulation can refer to the entire 7 years, comprised of two 3.5-year periods, but not to the Great Tribulation.

**THE GREAT TRIBULATION IS A DEFINED TERM MARKED BY THE FINALITY OF THIS  
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DOES NOT OCCUR UNTIL AFTER THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION, WHICH WE WILL  
FIND OCCURS DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE TWO 3.5-YEAR PERIODS OF TIME**

Let’s stop here and we will pick up with this topic and dive into an understanding of the time of the Lord’s Wrath in our next Podcast.