

## **Elder Vernon Johnson**

### **Numbers**

#### **Three and One Half**

#### **The Gentiles Tread the Court for Three and a Half Years**

Rev. 11:2 “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.”

In the scriptures, the court is the gathering place of the people. (See Lev. 6:16, 26; Jer. 19:14; 26:2; 36:10; 2 Chr. 6:13; 20:5) Also in the court the king spoke to the people (See 2 Chr. 6:13; 20:5). In addition, the court was the place that the priests were to eat the meat offering (Lev. 6:14-18) and the sin offering (Lev. 6:25, 26). Sometimes the prophets spake to the people in the court (Jer. 19:14; 26:2; 36:10). God’s glory filled the court (Ezek. 10:3-5). The people worshipped in the court (Jer. 26:2; Ezek. 8:16). Offerings were made in the court (2 Chr. 7:7). The gate of the court had hangings of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen, and pillars and sockets of silver and brass (Ex. 27:16). The dimensions of the court of the tabernacle were 100 cubits by 50 cubits, the same as the dimensions of the king’s house (Ex. 27:9-19; 1 Ki. 17:2). The dimensions of the court in Ezekiel’s vision were 100 cubits by 100 cubits, the same dimensions of the house of the Lord (Ezek. 40:19, 23, 27, 47; 41:13-15).

There are a great number of similarities between the court and the New Testament church. For instance, the church is the gathering of the Lord’s people (not the building, but the people themselves). (See Matt. 13:2, 47, 48; 18:20; 22:10; 23:37; Lk. 24:33; Acts 12:12; 14:27; 15:30; 20:8; 1 Cor. 5:4). Thru the preaching of the gospel, King Jesus speaks to the people: 1 Thes. 2: 13 “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” The Lord has made his people kings and priests unto God: Rev. 1:6 “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” As priests unto God according to 1 Pet. 2:5 “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” Thus as in the court, we are to offer up spiritual sacrifices in the church. As we have already seen the Lord speaks to his people in the church and he does this thru the gospel ministry. As the people worshipped in the court, today we worship God in the church (Eph. 2:20-22). The gate of the court was the place of entrance to the court.

The colors of the hangings all have a significance. For instance the color blue is associated with the law. The color scarlet is associated with the blood of Christ. The color purple is associated with royalty. The color white is associated with righteousness. Brass is associated with suffering and affliction. Silver is associated with redemption. By taking these things all together, we can see that, Christ, the righteous one (white) kept the law (blue) to a jot and tittle and became the perfect sacrifice for his people (scarlet), thus thru his sufferings on the cross (brass) and his shed blood (scarlet), he redeemed (silver) his people from their sins, thus making them righteous (white). He also made them kings and priests unto God (purple). This is in perfect harmony with Rev. 1:5 "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." It can also be noted that the church is the King's house which is the house of God: 1 Tim. 3:15 "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

The holy city in the Old Testament is identified as the city of Jerusalem in the following verses of scripture:

1. Neh. 11:1 "And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell in other cities."
2. Is. 52:1 "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean."
3. Dan. 9:24 "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."

The holy city in the New Testament is identified as the Lord's church or New Jerusalem in the following verses:

1. Rev. 21:2 "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."
2. Rev. 3:12 "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."
3. Rev. 22:10 "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and

showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." To tread under foot means to possess or have the victory as the following verses show:

1. Ex. 24:10 "And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness."
2. Deu. 1:36 "Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD."
3. Deu. 11:24 "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be."
4. Jos. 1:3 "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses."
5. Jos. 14:9 "And Moses swore on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God."

Based on the above verses we can conclude that the Gentiles have been given to possess the holy city or New Jerusalem (the church) for "forty two months."

The scriptures express in four different ways the period of time three and a half years. One of these ways is "forty two months." Three and one half plus three and one half equals seven. Seven represents completion in the scriptures. There are two testaments and only two testaments. Taking both the Old Testament and the New Testament together gives us the complete word of God. By studying the two witnesses in Rev. 11:3 we come to the conclusion that they represent the law and the prophets. Thus, they are the Old Testament. By studying the woman in Rev. 12:6 we are drawn to the conclusion that she represents the New Testament. By studying the times in which three and a half years is used in the scriptures we are drawn to the conclusion that regardless of the form in which it is presented it represents either the New Testament age or the Old Testament age. During the New Testament age, the Gentiles are to tread under foot (possess) the holy city (church) and to walk the court thereof.