

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 12TH–13TH, 2024 // REVELATION

MEASURING (REVELATION 11:1–2)

THERE'S MUCH DEBATE ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

There are two opinions about Chapter 11 that greatly affect how we view it and the chapters that follow. Basically, one can take this chapter literally or figuratively.

- There is no right or wrong, per se, but how one chooses to view it will change how they view Christ's return.

JOHN IS ON EARTH, BUT THE SCENE HAS SHIFTED

He stands in front of a "temple" and is given a measuring rod to "measure the temple of God and the altar, and count those who worship there."

- **Literally**, this would indicate the **temple** will be rebuilt in Jerusalem. **Figuratively**, these are **Christians** until Jesus returns (1 Corinthians 6:9).

JOHN RECEIVED A "REED"

This represents John recording how many Believers are present during the Great Tribulation.

- The reason John is told to measure just the inner court and exclude the outer is because anyone could enter into the outer courts of the temple. Only the inner court held true followers of God.

THE "OUTER COURTS" WILL BE GIVEN AWAY

The angel tells John that the outer court will be "given to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months."

- "The nations" are those who oppose God. This may indicate many Christians will die during these **42 months**. The "holy city" is either Jerusalem (literal) or Christians (figurative).

JERUSALEM HAD BEEN "TRAMPLED" BEFORE

In 168 B.C. by the Syrians and in 70 A.D. by the Romans.

GOD WILL PROTECT US...KIND OF

During the 42 months of suffering (trampling in outer courts), God will spiritually protect those in the "inner court." **We're not promised physical protection, except from God's wrath.**

TWO PROPHETS (REVELATION 11:3–6)

"TWO WITNESSES" WITH AUTHORITY

There are three main ways to interpret the two witnesses of Revelation 11: **1)** Literally two men sent to preach, either historical prophets brought back or new prophets. **2)** Symbolic of the Old and New Testaments. **3)** The church in whole or in part being prophetic to people on earth.

TWO WITNESSES ALWAYS AFFIRM TRUTH

In the Bible, at least two people confirm truth because one person could be disregarded legally (Deuteronomy 17 and 19; Matthew 18; 1 Timothy 5).

WITNESS CAN ALSO MEAN MARTYR

Witness in Greek is *martyr*, where we get our word martyr. We will soon see that these two will be true witnesses.

LET'S LOOK AT THE FIGURATIVE APPROACH

In Chapters 1–3, only 2 of the 7 churches had God's full approval. Some believe the **2 witnesses are churches or a portion of Christians** who spread the gospel and Jesus' coming during the 42 months of persecution.

- The fact that John calls them "lampstands" in v. 4 supports this.

NOW, LET'S LOOK AT THE LITERAL APPROACH

This will be **two men sent from two churches (lampstands)**. They're called "olive branches," which in Zechariah 4 are said to give oil/light to lampstands. Could this mean **two pastors?**

- Whoever it is, they walk in humility (dressed in sackcloth) and with extreme spiritual power.

FIRE COMES FROM THEIR MOUTHS?

The witnesses' ministry will be powerful, and when opposed, their words are "fire" that consumes their enemies. This is probably referring to rejection of the gospel (Matthew 18:18).

- *Consume* can be translated *eaten down*. **Eventually, rejecting the truth leads to degradation and destruction.**

PLAGUES WILL BE INFLICTED BY THEM

The reason some believe the witnesses are Elijah, Moses, or Enoch is because of their ability to "close up the sky," turn waters to blood, and "strike the earth with every plague."

- It is doubtful these men have come back, but whoever they are, they will have power to inflict plagues.

BLOOD ON THE STREET (REVELATION 11:7–10)

REMEMBER THE BITTER/SWEET CALLING?

For 42 months the witnesses shake the world with their teaching, but in the end, they're killed in the streets by "the beast...out of the abyss."

- God allows them to complete their mission and is **sovereign during the whole process**. It is also **a reminder that we are to be faithful even in the face of death.**

THE BEAST THAT "WILL MAKE WAR ON THEM"

There are two "beasts" in Revelation, one from the "sea" and one from the "earth." The "beast from the sea" is a political leader (the Antichrist) who will "make war" against the witnesses and eventually kill them.

- If taken figuratively, this would mean many Christians will be killed by the Antichrist.

DEAD BODIES IN THE "MAIN STREET"

Figuratively, these are dead Christians in various cities throughout the world. Literally speaking, the two witnesses are murdered in the new Babylon.

- For 3 ½ days the world will celebrate the deaths of the witnesses. The refusal to bury them is a sign of disrespect.

THE LOCATION IS A SOURCE OF DEBATE

This happens in the "great city, which figuratively is called Sodom and Egypt." Wherever this is, it

represents immorality (Sodom) and spiritual bondage (Egypt). The "great city" could also mean general opposition to God.

- "Where...their Lord was crucified" is a metaphor for killing Christians, not literally Jerusalem.

THE NEW BABYLON

Babylon was an OT city that was a recurring problem for the people of God. It encapsulated evil and oppressed God's people.

- In the future (?), there will be an epicenter of culture and innovation that will be antithetical to Christianity. Whether it is a literal city or a culture, it will be extremely influential.

RISING (REVELATION 11:11–14)

ECHOES OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

The witnesses will be dead for 3½ days as people celebrate. We learn the celebration is premature because "the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet."

- The figurative approach to the two witnesses causes many to believe this is a mid-tribulation rapture.

ANOTHER VIEW IS THIS IS UNIQUE TO MARTYRS

Some believe there will be a resurrection of the martyrs shortly before all Believers are raptured up.

- I personally believe this is more than likely two literal men who are killed and resurrected by God as their enemies watch in "great fear."

ASCENSION AND A VIOLENT EARTHQUAKE

A "loud voice from heaven" told the men to "come up here" after they resurrected. As they were ascending, very similarly to Jesus, a "violent earthquake took place."

- The earthquake is reminiscent of Christ's resurrection, but this will destroy a tenth of the city and 7000 people (Revelation 16:17–21?).

"THE SURVIVORS...GAVE GLORY TO...GOD"

This is probably not conversion, but out of extreme fear, they acknowledged God (Philippians 2:10–11).

We must remember that "every knee will bow," whether voluntarily or involuntarily.

- After this, John's vantage point returns to a heavenly one.

A CHRONOLOGICAL DEBATE

- Chapters 12–18 seem to be a flashback, or history of what was happening during the two witnesses' 42 months of preaching (Revelation 11:1–14).

THE END? (REVELATION 11:15–19)

"THE THIRD WOE IS COMING SOON!"

If the Bible says, "take note," we should pay attention. The mighty angel proclaimed the end would come after the 7th trumpet, and here it does, but we still have a lot of story left.

- Trumpets can signify battle and the 7th trumpet does just that. It signals the final battle between good and evil.

THE IDEA OF THE 7TH EVENTS BEING THE SAME

The theory that the last of all three sets of events are the same makes a lot of sense when we read about the 7th trumpet and eventually the 7th bowl in Chapter 16.

- Again, if one reads Chapters 12–18 alongside Revelation 11:1–14 (the 42 months), the story gets much clearer.

JOHN'S VANTAGE POINT RETURNS TO HEAVEN

Now John will record in greater detail and from an earthly perspective what is happening during the Great Tribulation.

- **One may view Chapters 6–11 as the heavenly perspective of the Great Tribulation, and Chapters 12–18 as the earthly perspective.**

THE "LOUD VOICES IN HEAVEN"

John records loud voices praising in heaven as Earth's time has run its course. The 1st line shows that ownership of the Earth is about to change hands.

- **The Earth has "belonged" to Satan, but that is coming to an end.** The 2nd line shows **this change will be permanent.**

THE ELDERS FALL FACEDOWN

Their posture from sitting on thrones has changed to falling facedown to worship. This is because the time for judging evil has begun.

- Good will be rewarded and evil will be destroyed. This will begin with the Bowls of Wrath (Revelation 16) that will be poured out very rapidly.

"THEN...THE ARK OF HIS COVENANT APPEARED"

Ch. 11 ends with imagery of the ark of the covenant that had been lost since 586 B.C.

- The ark represents the **promise** God has had with mankind. **We learn God will reveal all the things to us that we don't presently comprehend. We see all that has been stolen will be returned!**

SOMETIMES IT LOOKS BLEAK

- **Satan's objective is to steal, kill, and destroy** (John 10:10), and oftentimes it seems like he is winning.
- We must also remember that temporarily the world "is under the sway of the evil one" (1 John 5:19), but **God has given us the info (Bible) and help (Spirit) to endure.**

WALKING BY FAITH, NOT SIGHT (2 CORINTHIANS 5:7)

- **So, in this life we must not operate just by our emotions or senses, but by the truth of the Word and the leading of God's Spirit.**

- Walking by faith is only possible when we **know the principles and commands of our faith**, by **obeying them**, and through **prayer and trust** in Jesus.

REMEMBERING THE PROMISES OF GOD

- We must also remember Jesus assured us that the things of this world will pass away (Matthew 24:34–44). This means the pain, injustice, sin, and evil are temporary.

- As things get worse, we must remember that deliverance is coming, and it will be perfect and eternal (John 16:21–22).