

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 13TH, 2024 // REVELATION

MEASURING (REVELATION 11:1-2) LOTS OF DEBATE ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

There are two opinions about Chapter 11 that can greatly affect how one views it and the chapters that follow. One can take these chapters literally or figuratively.

- There is no right or wrong way to see this, but how one interprets this will decide how they view Christ's return.

THE SCENE HAS SHIFTED FOR JOHN

John is now standing in front of the "temple" and he is given a measuring rod and told to "measure the temple of God and the altar, and count those who worship there."

- This measuring is a sign of **divine protection** (Zechariah 1:16) similar to the 144,000.

INTERPRETATIONS OF THE TEMPLE

A **literal interpretation** of this section would indicate that a temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem. This would focus on the Jews and their place.

- A **figurative interpretation** would conclude that this is **God's people**, the church, until Jesus comes back (2 Corinthians 6:16).

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" refers to people who oppose God. This indicates that many 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.

- This trampling shows that many will leave the faith. Even though God will spiritually protect those in the "inner court," they **are not promised physical protection, except from God's wrath. Where will we choose to stand?**

TWO PROPHETS (REVELATION 11:3-6)

THE "TWO WITNESSES"

There are three main ways to interpret the two witnesses:

1. Literally two men are sent to preach; either historical prophets brought back or new prophets.
2. Symbolic of the OT and NT.
3. The church in whole, or part, being prophetic to people on earth.

TWO WITNESSES ARE REQUIRED

Throughout the Bible, at least two people must confirm the truth because a single person could be disregarded legally (Deuteronomy 17 and 19; Matthew 18:16).

- Despite the "holy city" being trampled, **God still offers people a chance to hear the truth and be saved.**

LET'S LOOK AT THE FIGURATIVE APPROACH

Some believe the **two witnesses are churches or a portion of Believers** that will heavily spread the gospel and teach of Jesus' coming during the 42 months of intense persecution.

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

A LOOK AT THE LITERAL APPROACH

This will be **two men sent from two churches (lampstands)**. They are called "olive trees," which in Zech. 4 are said to give oil/light to the lampstands, which often symbolizes spiritual revival. Could this mean these are **two pastors?**

HUMILITY

Whoever the two witnesses are, they walk in humility (dressed in sackcloth) and with extreme spiritual power. That is why some believe them to be Elijah, Moses, or Enoch.

- But it's not through their power but **by the Holy Spirit**. This comes from God alone. **We must rely on His strength!**

A "CONSUMING FIRE"

The ministry of these men/churches will be powerful. When they are opposed, the truth they speak and their call for repentance is a fire that consumes their enemies **because they love lies**.

- **Consume** can literally be translated as **eaten down**. **Eventually, rejecting the truth will lead to destruction.**

BLOOD ON THE STREETS (REVELATION 11:7-10)

WHEN THEY FINISH THEIR TESTIMONY

For 42 months the witnesses will rock the world with their teaching, but in the end, they will be killed by "the beast that comes up out of the abyss."

- No one will be able to stop them **until God's appointed time**. **We also are His witnesses, and He will protect us until our testimony is finished!**

THE BEAST "WILL MAKE WAR ON THEM"

This beast is seen as the beast from the sea in Ch. 13 which is a political leader (Antichrist). **This man of evil is dedicated to opposing God.**

- If we take the figurative approach, this would mean that a great number of Christians will be killed by the Antichrist.

DEAD BODIES IN THE "MAIN STREET"

From the **figurative** approach, these are dead Christians in various cities throughout the world. From the **literal** approach, the two witnesses are murdered in the new Babylon.

- For 3½ days, the world will watch and celebrate their deaths. The refusal to bury them is a sign of disrespect.

A GREAT CELEBRATION

The whole world will rejoice over the death of the two because they didn't want to hear about their **sin, the need for repentance, and judgment**.

- When we proclaim these things, don't be surprised by the suffering. But know **there is an incomparable glory to be revealed to us**. (Romans 8:18)

RISING (REVELATION 11:11-13)

ECHOES OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The witnesses will be dead for 3½ days until the celebration comes to an abrupt halt and turns into terror as "the breath of life from God" enters them.

- Many who believe in a mid-tribulation rapture base their views on these verses since they see the witnesses as figurative for the church.

ANOTHER VIEW IS THAT THIS IS FOR MARTYRS

Some believe this is a resurrection of the martyrs, and that there will be a rapture for Believers a little later.

- The main point is that **only those who believe in God will be taken to be with Him forever**, as He possesses all authority over life and death.

ASCENSION AND A VIOLENT EARTHQUAKE

A "loud voice from heaven" told the witnesses to "come up here" after they were resurrected. As they ascended, a "violent earthquake took place."

- This earthquake is similar to Christ's resurrection, but in this case, it will destroy a tenth of the city, and 7,000 people will be killed.

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

This is probably not conversion, but they recognized that God is all-powerful (Philippians 2:10). We must remember that **"every knee will bow," whether voluntarily or involuntarily**.

- After this, John's vantage point turns from Earth and returns to a heavenly one.

A CHRONOLOGICAL DEBATE

Some say that Chapters 12-18 are a flashback, or history of what was happening during the two witnesses' 42 months of preaching (Revelation 11:1-14).

THE END? (REVELATION 11:14-19)

"THE THIRD WOE IS COMING SOON!"

When the Bible says, "Take note," we should pay attention. The mighty angel proclaimed that the end would come after the 7th trumpet, but we still have a lot of story to tell.

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

IDEA OF THE 7TH EVENTS BEING THE SAME

The theory that the last of all 3 sets of events is the same becomes more apparent 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.

THE "LOUD VOICES IN HEAVEN"

Though the 7th trumpet signals the third "woe," what occurs is a **great victory shout** announcing that the ownership of the Earth is about to change hands.

- The Earth has "belonged" to Satan, but that's **coming to an end**. As proclaimed, **"he will reign forever and ever."**

THE ELDERS FALL FACEDOWN

Their posture from sitting on their thrones has changed to falling face-first to worship because the time for judging evil has begun.

- The elders say God "is" and "was" but He no longer "is to come" because He has come. Good will be rewarded, and evil will finally be destroyed.

"...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.

- This represents the **promise** God has always had with mankind. **There will no longer be sin to act as a barrier** between God and His people. **All that has been stolen will be returned.**

STEAL, KILL, DESTROY (JOHN 10:10)

- We have all made mistakes that have cost us dearly, or we have had evil done to us that has robbed us of possessions, loved ones, or our contentment.
- We often ask, "God, when will peace come? Will I ever have joy again? **When will the things taken from us be returned?**"
- Sometimes the most challenging task is to trust in God's timing.
- God knows the enemy comes to steal things that are valuable to us.
- **Revelation 11 reminds us that the thief's reign is coming to an end!**
- **The King will take back what has been stolen and reward those who are faithful!**

IT IS FOR HIS GLORY

- The reason for this redemption, along with creation itself, is that everything will glorify Him!
- **We can rob the thief of the joy he tries to take from us by glorifying God in all we do.**
- **When we desire to see His glory above all else, we will see the greatest potential in our lives fulfilled.**