

Revelation 11

Introduction:

Revelation 11:1-14 continues the second parenthetical section of the Book which began with Revelation 10:1.

- I. The Measuring Rod of the Lord – vs. 1-2
 - a. The Measuring Reed – vs. 1
This was most likely from a plant grown by the Jordan and used as an instrument of measurement. A ‘reed’ was a measure of about 10 ft long. – Ezekiel 40:5
 - b. John Instructed to Measure – vs. 1
Here, John becomes the actor in, as well as the observer of the vision.
 - c. The Significance of the Measuring of the Temple
There is a two-fold significance:
 - i. To measure off what belongs to God
It is an evaluation of God’s property. (Rev 21:15-17)
Notice, only the Temple itself (which would include the ‘Holy Place’ and the ‘Holy of Holies’) is included. The outer court is left out – at this time it is in the hands of the godless Gentiles – vs. 2.
 - ii. To measure up man against God’s standards
Since this Temple is the “Tribulation Temple”, it must face the test of God.

The act of measuring has prophetic significance. In Ezekiel 40-42, the prophet sees either the Lord in angelic form, or an angel, measuring the Millennial Temple. In Zechariah 2:1-2, the prophet sees an angel measuring the city of Jerusalem in preparation for the Millennial kingdom, Zechariah 2:3-13. In Rev 21:15-17, the New Jerusalem is measured with a golden reed.
 - d. The Reconstructed Jewish Temple in the Tribulation
There are 3 Biblical references indicating that a Jewish temple will be in existence during the Tribulation period:
 - i. Jesus Christ said so – Matthew 24:15
He is referring to Dan 9:27. The Antichrist will sit in the Holy place – the inner parts of the temple.
 - ii. The apostle Paul said so – II Thessalonians 2:3-4
This is referring to Daniel 11:36.
 - iii. The apostle John saw it and measured it – Revelation 11:1-2
 - e. The Nature of the Temple
There are worshippers in this temple.
 - i. The Temple is located in the ‘holy city’ – Jerusalem (Neh 11:1, 18; Dan 9:24).
 - ii. The antichrist will make a covenant with Israel.

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This is prophesied in Dan 9:27, and the clear inference is that sacrifices and oblations are involved.

- f. The Time Schedule Relating to the Tribulation Temple – vs. 2
 - i. Jerusalem to be trodden down
See: Luke 21:24. This period has actually been going on since the first invasion of King Nebuchadnezzar in 606 BC.
The “Times of the Gentiles” refers to the period of Gentile domination of Israel and in particular, Jerusalem. The Tribulation period is the climax of this period.
 - ii. Forty-Two months – This equals 3 ½ years. It refers to:
 1. The 1260 days – Revelation 11:3; 12:6
 2. The 42 months – Revelation 13:5
 3. The ‘Time, Times, and Half a Time’. – Revelation 12:14
 4. The Half of Daniel’s 70th week – Daniel 9:27
 - iii. Revelation 11:2 indicates the end of the Times of the Gentiles.
This verse gives us the time scale, and places John’s measuring of the Temple at the middle of the Tribulation.

- II. The Two Witness of the Lord – vs. 3-6
 - a. The Identity of the Two Witnesses – vs. 3-4
 - i. A positive statement of their identity – vs. 3
They are “My two witnesses”. Of this we can be certain. They will be two literal men (not the Old and New Testaments).
 - ii. Some suggestions as to their identity
 1. Moses and Elijah
 - Both present at the Transfiguration Matt 16:28; 17:3
 - Both represent the “Law and the Prophets”
 - Moses was given power to turn waters to blood and smite the earth with plagues – vs. 6
 - Elijah was given power to prevent rain from falling – vs. 6
 - Elijah is prophesied as returning to earth before the Day of Judgment. Mal 4:5-6 (Some point out that this prophecy was fulfilled by John the Baptist, Matt 17:10-13. However, Luke 1:17 indicates John the Baptist ministered in the ‘spirit and power’ of Elijah. Jn 1:21)
 2. Enoch and Elijah
 - Elijah for the reasons above.
 - Both did not die. Gen 5:24; II Kgs 2:11.
 - Enoch himself prophesied the second coming of Christ – Jude 14-15
 3. John and Elijah
 - The aged apostle was told he would still yet witness to many peoples, nation, tongues, and kings. Rev 10:11

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- b. The Description of the Two Witnesses. – vs. 3-4
 - i. Clothed in sackcloth
This is an outward symbol of mourning, sorrow, and repentance. Is 37:1-2
 - ii. Two olive trees, two candlesticks – vs. 4
This verse has reference to Zechariah 4:1-4, 11-14. The immediate fulfillment of this prophecy in Zechariah's day was seen in Zerubbabel (the re-builder) and Joshua (the high priest). These were two men who stood out for God in their day, and prophetic forerunners of the 2 witnesses of the Book of Revelation.
- c. The Ministry of the Two Witnesses.
 - i. The period of ministry – vs. 3 – Active for 3 ½ years.
 - ii. The nature of their ministry.
 - 1. Prophecy – They will proclaim judgment against men and the Man of Sin.
 - 2. Torment – See: vs. 10. This is a period of judgment, not grace.
 - iii. The power of their ministry – vs. 5-6
They are given judgmental powers. Cf II Kgs 17:1-4; Num 16:35
- III. The Death and Resurrection of the Two Witnesses – vs. 7-12
 - a. Kept until their ministry is finished – vs. 7
This is a source of comfort to all who serve the Lord – God only takes us home when we have finished our designated task. II Cor 12:1-4; II Tim 4:6-7.
 - b. The Beast from the Bottomless Pit – vs. 7
This is the same beast of Rev 13:7, the Antichrist. The fact that he comes out of the bottomless abyss may be an indication of his 'death and resurrection' which will probably occur at this time.
 - c. The Death of the Two Witnesses – vs. 7
 - d. The Spectacle of the dead bodies of the Two Witnesses – vs. 8-9
 - i. Left to lie in the streets
 - ii. Killed in Jerusalem
Vs 8 identifies the city as the one where Jesus was crucified.
Note the two similes for the city:
Sodom – indicating a morally perverted city.
Egypt – indicating a spiritually perverted city.
 - e. The Rejoicing of men over the deaths of the Two Witnesses – vs. 10
The phrase "they that dwell on the earth" is used 7 times in the Revelation (3:10; 6:10; 11:10; 13:8, 14; 14:6; 17:8) and has special reference to defiant man.
 - f. The Resurrection of the Two Witnesses – vs. 11
 - i. They will be dead for 3 ½ days – No chance of being in a swoon.
 - ii. They will be supernaturally raised
 - g. The Ascension of the Two Witnesses. – vs. 12

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The voice from heaven is the same John hears in Rev 4:1. They will be raptured, but evidently in 'slow-motion'.

IV. The Second Woe Befalls the Earth – vs.13-14

a. A Great Earthquake – vs. 13 – Within an hour of the 2 witnesses return to heaven

- One-tenth of Jerusalem destroyed
- 7000 men killed
- The remaining dwellers in Jerusalem give God the glory
They were literally 'frightened to death'!! The fact that they gave God the glory does not mean they were saved. Cf. Luke 5:21,26

b. The Declaration of the Second Woe – vs. 14

The first woe was the sounding of the 5th Trumpet. Rev 8:13; 9:12.

c. The Announcement of the Third Woe – vs. 14

This comes with the sounding of the 7th Trumpet

V. The Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet – vs. 15-19

The parenthetical passage is ended and the description of the last trumpet is given. The trumpet brings no plagues upon the earth, except that with it the Temple in heaven is opened, vs. 19, bringing upon the earth the 7 vial judgments, Rev 15:5-6; 16:1.

The Sounding of the Trumpet brings a great announcement of the impending end to the rule of Satan and man, and the establishment of the reign of Jesus Christ. This is in fulfillment of much prophecy. E.g. Dan 2:35, 44; 4:3; 6:26; 7:13-14, 26-27; Ez 21:26-27; Zech 14:9

The actual fulfillment of this announcement is in Rev 19:11-21, but the events are set in motion, and the Great Tribulation hastens to its climax.

a. The Reaction to the Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet – vs. 16-18

The representatives of the saved in heaven worship and praise God.

The nations on the earth will fly into rage. See: Ps 2:1-6. This verse seems to be part of the praise of the 24 elders. Notice it is a time when accounts will be settled:

For the Lost World – wrath, death, destruction

For the Saints - rewards

b. The Temple of God in Heaven – vs. 19

This temple is the one the Tabernacle was patterned after, Ex 25:40; Heb 9:23