

Revelation 11

...my two witnesses...

...καὶ δώσω τοῖς δυοῖν μάρτυσίν μου...

Chapter Outline:

I. THE TEMPLE OF GOD, vv. 1-2

- A. The measuring Rod, v.1
- B. John *was to* measure:
 - 1. The temple of God
 - 2. The Altar
 - 3. Them that worship therein, v. 1
- C. John *was not to* measure:
 - 1. The outer court, v. 2

II. THE TWO WITNESSES OF GOD, vv. 3-13

- A. Who are they?
- B. Their ministry will be one that is:
 - 1. Of power—their ministry will be effective
 - 2. Of prophecy—their ministry will be prophetic
 - 3. Of preaching and demonstrating repentance—they are clothed in sackcloth, v. 3
 - 4. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, v.4
- C. They will be divinely protected and are granted divine authority to defend themselves for 1260 days or 3½ years, vv.5-6
- D. When their testimony is finished the beast will overcome and kill them but God will raise them from the dead and catch them up into heaven, vv.7-13

III. THE 7TH TRUMPET IS SOUNDED, vv. 14-15

- A. The 7th and final trumpet judgment will unfold to us the 7 vial or bowl judgments later on in chapter 16. Thus it is with this last trumpet that all kingdoms of this world will be brought under the rule of our Lord, and of His Christ; and he shall rule for ever and ever, vv.14-15

IV. THE ELDERS IN HEAVEN WORSHIP BEFORE THE THRONE, vv. 16-19

- A. The elders worship and thank the Lord for reigning, v.17
- B. The time of judgment & reward for God's servants has come and the world's wrath is over because God's wrath has come, vv.18-19 (End of ch. temple of God in heaven open, ark seen)

I. THE TEMPLE OF GOD, vv. 1-2

A. The measuring Rod, v.1

1. "The measuring reed...was commonly grown in the Jordan valley, and had many uses, one of which was a measuring rod. In smaller lengths it was used as a "pen," and the word is so translated in 3 John 13." ¹
2. God commands John to measure:
 - a) God's measurement proclaims his ownership and authority over the edifice. This measuring is an overview of what belongs to God.

B. John *was to* measure:

1. The temple of God
 - a) This is a literal temple that is being spoken of here not a symbolic one representing the Church.
 - b) Those that hold to the view that this temple is speaking of the Church will perhaps quote from Ephesians 2:19-21 and 1 Peter 2:5 were both Paul and Peter refer to the Church as being a temple or a spiritual house.
 - c) "However, if this temple in [Revelation 11](#) is a symbolic representation of the church, why should it be measured? What is the significance of the courts and the altar - and if the church itself is the temple, who are the worshippers (those who worship there)? There is too much specific detail here for this to be using the generalized picture of the church as a temple unto God." ²
 - d) The fact that John is told to measure the temple of God and that the timing here would place this measuring back at the beginning of the 7 year tribulation period (looking back retrospectively in ch. 11) indicates to us that the temple which today doesn't exist will exist one day in the perhaps not to distant future.
 - (1) There are organizations even today which exist for the soul purpose of rebuilding the temple. The Temple Institute and The Temple Mount Faithful are two such organizations. These people are very dedicated and serious about rebuilding the temple.

¹ Henry Morris, The Revelation Record, p.191

² David Guzik, Commentary on Revelation taken from www.blueletterbible.org

- (2) This temple has to and will be rebuilt as fulfillment of this prophecy in Revelation 11 and others found elsewhere in the Bible. For instance the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet (Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) and our Lord (Matthew 24:15-16) happens in the middle of the tribulation period when the Antichrist breaks his peace treaty which he previously made with Israel. He will go into the recently rebuilt temple (only about 3½ years old) and proclaim himself to be God and to be worshiped as such (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).
- (3) Looking at the temple mount today it is hard to imagine the Muslims would ever allow such a thing to happen. After all, there are many who believe that the Dome of the Rock Mosque is standing over the very site of the ancient Jewish temple's old footprint. If this is true then when the Jews rebuild their temple will they destroy the Mosque and erect their new Temple in its place? Or will there be another alternative Temple situation or location that will allow both to exist on almost on the same plot of land together?
- (4) Perhaps this is what is meant when John is told not to measure the outer courts. If the temple, like Asher Kaufman purports, is north of the Dome of the Rock, then the outer court which John was not to measure because it would be given to the gentiles would be the same place as where the Dome of the Rock exists today and would not need to be torn down. This solution could be what the Antichrist proposes to the Jews and Muslims at the beginning of the tribulation period to make peace between the two parties and between himself and the Jewish people he will cut a peace treaty. We will have to wait and see!

2. The Altar

- a) Perhaps either the brazen altar or the altar of incense. Both have been referred to in previous chapters. In fact both are mentioned in a single verse, 8:3.

3. Them that worship therein, v. 1

- a) The worshipers were measured too! This is an interesting task John had to fulfill.
- b) No doubt here we are not talking about the physical stature but the spiritual.
- c) Those that will one day worship in this temple will be measured and they won't measure up.

- d) It is interesting to see the things of prophecy concerning the Temple coming together before our very eyes. As Christians we justifiably get excited at these things. But the reality of temple worship being instituted again is just another loud proclamation by the Jewish people that they reject Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah.
- e) "The new altar is an insult to the Lamb of God, who had offered one sacrifice for sins forever; and the worshipers in the temple, though professing to honor God, have rejected Christ. Therefore all come short, when the measuring rod of God's standard is applied."³

C. John *was not to* measure:

1. The outer court, v. 2

- a) See above.

II. THE TWO WITNESSES OF GOD, vv. 3-13

A. Who are they?

- 1. Enoch and Elijah; these never died and need to make their appointment with death (Hebrews 9:27). Both walked with and before the Lord and Elijah performed miracles of stopping the rain and calling down fire on his enemies.
- 2. Elijah and Moses; Both performed miracles mentioned in the list here and both were at the mount of transfiguration. Moses died but his body was disputed over by the devil for some odd reason (Jude 1:9)
- 3. Perhaps these two came to faith in Christ after the rapture occurred and are not any character from past pages of history that would be known to us.
- 4. The last prophecy of the Old Testament in Malachi 4:5-6 says "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." This perhaps will be fulfilled when the two witness
- 5. The fact is we really don't know and God does not think we need to know.

³ Henry Morris, *The Revelation Record*, p. 191

B. Their ministry will be one that is:

1. Of power—their ministry will be effective
2. Of prophecy—their ministry will be prophetic
3. Of demonstrating/preaching repentance—they are clothed in sackcloth, v.3
4. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, v.4
 - a) The imagery is taken from Zechariah's prophecy. He had originally said the very same words to Zerubbabel and Joshua. In many ways those two men from the old testament were a light and a witness to Israel as they were empowered by the Holy Spirit. So to, these here in Revelation 11 are God's witnesses (lights) baring testimony to those the Jew and Gentile alike.

C. They will be divinely protected and are granted divine authority to defend themselves for 1260 days or 3½ years, vv.5-6