

## Revelation 11: 1 – 19 (NASB) Notes

### Two Witnesses & the Seventh Trumpet

#### ❖ **Woe! Woe! ... What do two martyrs reveal about the future?**

- **Time is not necessarily chronological or sequential.** Some of these events may run concurrently with previous events described in earlier chapters. The action of the two witnesses may summarize the first four trumpet judgments and/or the coming bowl judgments.
- Many commentators believe this is the most difficult & most important chapter in Revelation. **Most important because it is a broad summary of the rest of the book.**
- **There are 404 verses in the book of Revelation, in which there are 518 references to earlier Scripture passages, but without a single quote ... all allusions.**

1 Then there was given me a **measuring rod** like a staff; and someone said, “Get up and **measure** the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it.

#### ❖ **What does the mention of the temple, altar & worshippers indicate? Why is this important?**

- Antichrist makes a covenant with the nation of Israel ...
- Israel is worshipping again in a restored temple. See **Daniel 9:26-27; Luke 21:20-24; 2 Thess. 2:3-4**

#### ❖ **What is behind the metaphor of “measuring” the temple, the altar, and the worshippers?**

- A “measuring rod” was approx. 10 ½ feet.
- To “measure” [μετρέω] means both “to judge according to a standard” and “to claim for oneself” ... ∴ God’s ownership & protection.
- Read Ezekiel 40:1-4; then scan 40:5 – 42:20; then read 43:1-12.

#### ❖ **Is this a literal temple, or a metaphor for the Church?**

2 Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for **42 months**.

#### ❖ **Why was John instructed NOT to measure the “outer court” of the temple?**

- The temple had four courts.

3 And I will grant authority to my **two witnesses**, and they will prophesy for **1260 days**, clothed in **sackcloth**.”

#### ❖ **Who are potential identities of the “two witnesses”? Why?**

- Allegorically, could be the Law & the Prophets; or the O.T. & N.T.
  - The ancient church (Tertullian, Irenaeus, Hippolytus) taught these were Enoch (Gen. 5:24) & Elijah (2 Kings 2:11) since these two did not experience death.
  - Moses (Ex. 4:9; 7:3, 14-18) and Elijah (1 Kings 17:1; 18:38, 41-45; 2 Kings 1:10-12)?
  - Zerubbabel and Joshua? (Zechariah 4:1-3, 4-6, 9-14; Ezra 2:1-2; 3:1-2; 5:1-2; Haggai 1:1-5, 8, 12-15; 2:1-4, 20-23)
  - Two Sections: 11: 3 – 6 Prophetic Ministry                      11: 7 – 13 Death, Resurrection, Results
  - **“sackcloth”** symbolized mourning for sin (Joel 1:8; **Amos 8:10**).
- 4 These are the two **olive trees** and the two **lampstands** that stand before the Lord of the earth.
- **“Two witnesses”** meets the legal requirement of Deut. 17:6; 19:15
- 5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way.
- **“fire from mouth”** also found in Jeremiah 5:14.
- 6 These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.
- 7 When they have **finished** their testimony, the **beast** that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them.
- **“finished”** [τελέω] = fulfilled; a work completed, or a goal attained. ∴ Once again points to divine sovereignty!
  - ❖ **Who is the “beast out of the abyss”?**
  - **“beast”** [θηρίον] = a wild, savage beast of prey with a ravenous appetite. This is the first of 36 references in Revelation to this archenemy of God’s people.
  - ❖ **Who is Antichrist?**
  - Cf., Daniel 7:25 initially fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes, the Seleucid king; but ultimately to Antichrist, too. Cf., Jesus’ statements in Matt. 24:15 & Mark 13:14. Cf., Paul’s reference in 2 Thess. 2:3-4.

- Hermeneutical tip: Eschatological (prophetic) events are frequently foreshadowed in historical events.

8 And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the **great** city which mystically is called **Sodom** and **Egypt**, where also their Lord was crucified.

❖ **What city is identified?**

- “**great**” [μέγας] – occurs **8x** in this chapter alone.
- Sodom symbolized worldliness & debauchery (Isa. 1:9-10). Egypt symbolized pride & rebellion.
- ❖ **Much has been written about the various combinations of specific numbers in this chapter (e.g., 42 months (v. 2 = 3.5 yrs), 1260 days (v. 3 = 42 mos), 1/10 of the city (v. 13), 7000 people (v. 13). What might these describe?**

9 Those from the **peoples** and **tribes** and **tongues** and **nations** will look at their dead bodies for **three and a half days**, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb.

- This 4-fold list is the fourth of seven occurrences: 5:9 & 7:9 = Christians converted from nations; 10:11, 11:9, 13:7, 17:15 = nations in rebellion.
- No burial – **Psalm 79:1-3**; 1 Kings 21:24; **Jer. 8:1-2**; 14:16
- Seems to indicate an international awareness of their martyrdom.

10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

❖ **Why do the earth-dwellers “throw a party” when the two witnesses are martyred?**

11 But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them.

- Cf., the “*dead bones*” in Ezekiel 37:5, 10

12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “*Come up here.*” Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them.

13 And in that hour there was a great **earthquake**, and tenth of the city fell; 7000 people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

- Three earthquakes: Rev. 6:12; 11:13; 16:18-20
- **What is the unexpected response of survivors after they observe the resurrection of the two witnesses?**

14 The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

- “Heptadic Structure”
- 11: 15 – 19 is a summary of the judgments in **ch. 16**.

15 Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”

- Cf., Daniel 7:13-14
- Matthew 4:8-10 – Satan offered these kingdoms to Jesus, but He rebuffed the temptation and went the way of the cross (Phil. 2:5-11).
- Cf., Handel’s “Messiah”
- This is the central theme of the Book of Revelation: the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

16 And the 24 elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God,

- Another “Outburst of Praise & Worship”
- ❖ **Why do the 24 elders worship because Jesus now?**
- “**reigns**” [βασιλεύω] = to exercise kingly power
- “**judges**” [κρίνω] = to separate, put asunder, pick out ... ∴ to render an opinion re. right & wrong
- “**rewards**” [μισθός] = dues paid for work

17 saying, “We give you thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are [is] and who were [was], because You have taken Your great power and begun to **reign**.”

- Memory verse
- Cf., 1:4, 8; 4:8 **What is different?**

18 And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be **judged**, and the time to **reward** Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”

- Cf., Psalm 2

19 And the temple of God which is in heaven was **opened**; and the **ark** of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

❖ **What is significant about the ark of the covenant appearing in the open temple?**

- This reminds the audience of God's presence and His faithfulness to His covenant promises.

❖ **What lessons have you learned from Revelation 1 – 11?**

- Henry Blackaby's "Experiencing God" workbook, pp. 56-57 ... we are created for eternity.

- **GRACE**

- God's delaying tactics will end, His provision of grace will cease to those who reject him. (Chuck W.)

- **"Eat the Word"!**

- We are learning about God's love ... grandson learning to respond to his mother's love.

- *Letters to 7 Churches* personalizes God's message about the future. (Rick M.)

- Breadth of Christ's glory, character & ministry = authority, dignity, eternity, wisdom, judgment, power ... He is in control! (Chuck W.)

- Call to spiritual vigilance / complacency kills! (Chuck W.)

- Holy Spirit holding back wrath. (Chuck W.)

- "Revelation Song" (lyrics on next page)

## Revelation Song

Kari Jobe

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
Holy, holy is He.  
Sing a new song to Him who sits on  
Heaven's mercy seat.

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty  
Who was and is and is to come.  
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings  
You are my everything and I will adore You.*

Clothed in rainbows of living color  
Flashes of lighting rolls of thunder.  
Blessing and honor strength and glory and power be  
To You the only wise King.

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty  
Who was and is and is to come.  
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings  
You are my everything and I will adore You.*

Filled with wonder, awestruck wonder  
At the mention of Your name.  
Jesus Your name is power, breath and living water  
Such a marvelous mystery.

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty  
Who was and is and is to come.  
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings  
You are my everything and I will adore You, I will adore You.*  
(repeat)