

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 11

Introductory Notes

- This is one of the more difficult passages in the Book of Revelation and leaves many questions unanswered.
- Does not appear to be chronological, as a 3½ year time span is described.
- Ends by returning to the chronological order of the Trumpet judgments with the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, before stepping back away from chronological order.

Outline

- Measuring the Temple – vs. 1-2
- The Two Witnesses - vs. 3-14
- The Seventh Trumpet - vs. 15-19

Notes

- vs. 1 - reed - as grow in wetlands, can be over 10' tall, and were often used to measure in Bible times. We find similar measuring in Zechariah 2, Ezekiel 40, and Revelation 21:15-17.
- vs. 1 - the Temple being measured is the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem. It appears to be built at the beginning of the Tribulation as part of a peace treaty with Israel – Daniel 9:27, 12:11; II Thessalonians 2:4.
- vs. 2 – The command to measure the rebuilt Temple and the new Brazen Altar shows God's continued claim to those even though the Temple is defiled and overrun by the Antichrist and his followers.
- vs. 2 - 42 months – 3½ years. I think this is the last half of the Tribulation.
- vs. 3 - two witnesses – required by Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 17:6). Theories about their identity include:
 - Elijah – one could be him, fulfilling Malachi 4:5.
 - Moses and Elijah - the miracles ascribed to them are similar - Matthew 17:3.
 - Enoch and Elijah - both were taken to Heaven by special means.
 - Unknown witnesses - that these are just two people that God uses.
- vs. 3 - 1,260 days - using 30-day months, this is 42 months or 3½ years. I think this refers to the second half of the Tribulation specifically.
- vs. 4 - olive trees, candlesticks - hearkens back to the imagery of Zechariah 4
- vs. 5 - fire - similar to Elijah in 2 Kings 1:10-14
- vs. 6 - rain - similar to Elijah in 1 Kings 17:1

- vs. 6 - waters to blood - similar to Moses in Exodus 7:17-19
- vs. 6 - plagues - similar to Moses in Exodus 7-12
- vs. 7 - beast – we will cover this when we get to chapter 13.
- vs. 8 - the city is obviously Jerusalem
- vs. 9-10 - note that the entire world sees and knows they are dead as their bodies are displayed as trophies. This has only become feasible in the past century.
- vs. 11-12 - the witnesses are resurrected and ascend to Heaven as the world watches.
- vs. 12 - “come up hither” - this IS NOT the Rapture, but similar to Christ’s ascension in Acts 1:9
- vs. 13 - earthquake – very specific! 10% of city destroyed and 7,000 killed. This is a foreshock of the one to come in 16:18-19.
- vs. 14 - Second Woe - the first is the Fifth Trumpet in 8:13, the second is the Sixth Trumpet, and the third follows in the Seventh Trumpet though the Seven Vial judgments in chapter 16.
- vs. 15 - Seventh Trumpet.
- vs. 15 - kingdoms - God is claiming His property anticipating the coming Kingdom.
- vs. 16-17 - 24 elders - remember them from Chapters 4 and 5?
- vs. 18 – See Psalm 2:1-3
- vs. 19 – The heavenly Temple (not the earthly one) is opened a heavenly Ark of the Covenant (not the earthly one) is revealed. I see a connection here to the Jewish system of keeping records as seen in Jeremiah 32:10-15. There is an “open” copy and a “sealed” copy of each transaction. The earthly Ark of the Covenant, the “open” testimony of God’s covenant with Israel, was lost as the “times of the Gentiles” began as Israel was dominated by foreign powers after their fall to Babylon in 586 B.C. The heavenly Ark, the “closed” testimony of the covenant, is here opened. God is revealing His authority to act. This also explains why the next chapter does not continue the chronological narrative, but instead rehearses the history Satan’s crimes against God’s covenant people, Israel.