



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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Chapter Eleven

- **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. 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 forty-two months. 3 And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 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. 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.**

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- **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. **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. **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. **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. **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. **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 a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. **14** The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

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- Perhaps the place to begin this lesson is with a reminder of where we are in the timetable of the great tribulation.
- We are between the 6th and 7th trumpet judgments in a sort of respite where the unsaved can evaluate their options, and the saved can brace themselves for what is about to come.
- As I said before, God is immutable (never changes) and even in times of great judgment He still extends great grace and mercy.

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- **At the end of chapter 10, John was told that he has more prophesying to do about “many peoples and nations and tongues and kings’.**
- **Remember that John is writing around 95 A.D. which means the temple he once knew has been completely destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D.**
- **Now in his vision he sees a temple – therefore, since John sees a temple in the last days, and since there is no temple standing now, we can conclude that one will be built.**

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- **And while the writings of John will be the most prominent witness in the end times to what is happening, they are not the only witness.**
- **We have the 144,000 sealed Jewish converts that will be preaching the gospel, the converted gentiles, and the angel of Revelation 14:6 who is also preaching the gospel.**
- **And today we will see two more very important witnesses that will preach, die, and be resurrected.**

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- So here in chapter 11 John is instructed to measure the temple and that assumes one exists; and it will.
- Amos 9:11 “In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David, And wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins And rebuild it as in the days of old”
- The temple will be built with the approval of the one world government at the time as a part of the peace treaty signed with Israel for their protection Or supposed protection.

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- **The tribulation temple will no doubt be built early on in the 7 year period we are calling the Great Tribulation.**
- **When Israel and her enemies enter into a peace treaty orchestrated by Anti-Christ and his forces, they will be free to worship in peace for a time, but it is a set-up.**
- **In the middle of that 7 year period (42 months or 1,260 days in) Anti-Christ will commit the “abomination of desolation” and demand worship.**

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- **So why is John asked to measure the temple? Does God not know its dimensions? Is there some doubt as to its size?**
- **No, God is not uninformed, God is doing what He does in other cases where He will measure something for His glory, or to mark it off as His possession.**
- **Rev 21:15 The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls.**
- **Perhaps the most interesting point to be made about this measuring is that John is told to omit the outer court from his measurement.**

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- **Rev 11:2** Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations (gentiles); and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months.
- In the temple worship, the outer court was reserved for the gentiles and God is making a statement that in the great tribulation, while gentiles may still come to Him by faith, His primary concern now is the nation of Israel.
- So in this case it can be said that God is separating His chosen people for special attention.

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- **While John was told to exclude the outer court, he was just as clearly told to include the alter.**
- **The brazen alter was that space where the worshippers would gather to offer to sacrifices, burn incense, and generally honor God.**
- **So if I am right that God is “measuring an area” for His glory, then the picture is of a redeemed Israel worshipping God.**

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- We need to revisit Daniel 9 once again
- Dan 9:26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. 27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

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- **Matt 24:15 “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.”**
- **Here Jesus confirms there will be a temple in the end times by referring to Daniel’s prophecy and affirming it.**
- **The Anti-Christ could not make his profane pronouncement from the holy place unless there is a temple to house the holy place.**

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- 2 Thes 2:1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, 2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.
- This is the proof text that the abomination of desolation is Anti-Christ entering the temple of God declaring himself to be God. (see Isaiah 14 regarding Lucifer's rebellion)

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- Let's talk about the timing of John's temple prophecy - 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 forty-two months.
- A 42 month period is the time period of the second half of the great tribulation and it is during this time that Anti-Christ's false religion will be enforced.
- Anti-Christ will be in the temple seated where he ought not to be demanding your worship, or your execution.

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- **Of course inherent in all that we are discussing here is the fact that during the Great Tribulation Israel will return to their O.T. style of sacrifice and worship.**
- **Why else would they have a temple?**
- **They could study their scriptures anywhere, they could meet and celebrate almost anywhere, but in order to return to the Levitical system of worship, they will need a temple.**

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- And the effect on the Jewish people of this return to worship in the end times is that they will be more open to the things of God and His promises to them, and the Holy Spirit will open their eyes to Jesus.
- Zach 12:9 And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 *“I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.”*

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- 3 “And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.”
- So here in verse #3 we meet two individuals identified as “my two witnesses” who will prophesy for the same 42 months as Anti-Christ will be in charge of the temple.
- They are wearing sackcloth, or what would be commonly associated with mourning garments.

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- **Now regarding the mission the two witnesses, we are told that they will be “prophesying” – so what is that?**
- **If I were to prophesy, I could be speaking about things to come that have not otherwise been revealed (foretelling), or I may be proclaiming the gospel, or preaching (forthtelling).**
- **There is no evidence these two are foretelling future events, and since they are so hated by the world, it is fair to assume I think, that these two are preachers of the gospel.**

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- 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.
- So this seems clear, does it not? These two witnesses are olive trees and lampstands – clear as mud right?
- Well, actually the terms “olive trees” and “lampstands” turn out to be the key words to understanding what God is doing with these two witnesses and who they are.

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- **In order to get a good handle on the ministry of the two witnesses we will have to go back to Zachariah.**
- **Zechariah lived between Ezra and Nehemiah, the rebuilding of the temple had been approved in Ezra's time, but was not being done – someone had to be called to encourage some action.**
- **We are going to meet the two men God called in Zachariah's day to build the temple and revive Israel, Joshua (a priest) and Zerubbabel (a ruler of the people).**

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- **Zachariah is prophesying during the time of the Babylonian captivity – a time when Israel would understandably be pretty low on themselves.**
- **They knew they had turned their backs on God, sinned grossly, and were suffering for it.**
- **They had little or no hope that God would restore them, that He would again accept their worship, and save them – perhaps just like the Jews of the Great Tribulation period will feel.**

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- **I won't take the time to read all of Zachariah 3, but if we did we would see that while Joshua, the priest, was imperfect and sinful, he is offered the hope that comes from obedience.**
- **He is informed that no matter what he had done, or how far he had fallen, God could, would still restore him as the spiritual leader of Israel.**
- **And, that Israel itself could also be forgiven and restored if they would only turn back to God in obedience.**

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- **Zach 4:1** Then the angel who had been talking with me returned and woke me, as though I had been asleep. **2** “What do you see now?” he asked. I answered, “I see a solid gold lampstand with a bowl of oil on top of it. Around the bowl are seven lamps, each having seven spouts with wicks. **3** *And I see two olive trees, one on each side of the bowl.* **4** Then I asked the angel, “What are these, my lord? What do they mean?” **5** “Don’t you know?” the angel asked. “No, my lord,” I replied. **6** Then he said to me, “This is what the Lord says to Zerubbabel: *It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.*”

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- **So how does all of this tie into the two witnesses of Revelation 11?**
- **Because God is saying that while Israel has drifted so far from Him and His promises now for thousands of years, that the call on their lives was never dependent on them.**
- **The “automated” menorah, if you will, is proof that God is the sustainer of all things He deems important, and that it is by His Spirit that His redemption plan will succeed.**

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- **So when John writes that the two witnesses are olive trees and lampstands, he is not saying that they are Joshua and Zerubbabel.**
- **He is saying that they stand their prophesying because God has ordained the redemption of His people, Israel, in the end times just as He did at other times in History.**
- **And that redemption will happen because Rom 11:29 says “for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.”**

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- **So who are the two witnesses?**
- **We are not told exactly who they are, but there are some clues, and the clues lead most people to conclude these are probably Moses and Elijah.**
- **We will explore that more fully next week.**

Questions