

Rev. 11:1 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

Rev. 11:2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty *and* two months.

“the angel stood” – The word for *stood* in the Greek indicates “stood, abide, continue, stand by.” In other words, he continued to stand in the position he had assumed in chapter 10.

John is still on the earth as he receives this instruction. The first thing that jumps out at you is that there is a temple to measure. He is told to measure the temple of God and the altar and them that worship therein. The fact that John is told to measure certain things seems to indicate that these items, or what they represent, are treasured by the LORD. The temple was first established to represent God’s presence among His people, His desire to fellowship with them. The altar represents the great sacrifice that He was willing to make to redeem those He loves from sin. The worshippers represent those that have chosen to accept His sacrifice on their behalf and who desire intimate fellowship with Him. Though the physical temple will be desecrated and the sacrifice of Jesus scorned by the Antichrist and those that follow Him, those that worship Him will emerge victorious when He returns to establish His earthly kingdom and build a new and glorious temple.

John was specifically instructed not to measure the outer court because it had been given to the Gentiles for 42 months—3.5 years. It’s like John is being told that although the Gentiles will be in control for that period of time, Jesus will preserve that which is holy and separate to Him—including the worshippers. This seems to infer that Israel is in control of the temple complex during the first 3.5 years and that the antichrist takes control the second 3.5 years. This understanding is supported by the prophet Daniel.

Daniel 9:27 *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: **and in the midst of the week** he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease....*

Once the temple is rebuilt, it will be a place of worship to God once again during the first 3.5 years. This will be a time of opportunity for the Jews to turn back to God in faith. After the first 3.5 years, Antichrist will step in to desecrate the holy place. Paul talks about this in his letter to the Thessalonians.

2 Thessalonians 2:3–4 *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who*

opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

It would seem that there is room for speculation for something unholy to be in the court of the Gentiles during the first 3.5 years—possibly the Dome of the Rock.

Rev. 11:3 And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

Rev. 11:4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

It's at this point that we are introduced to "two witnesses" who are sent as modern day prophets to witness for a specific time period—1260 days or 3.5 years (based on the biblical use of a 360-day calendar). During their ministry they will be supernaturally protected and will be able to destroy with fire anyone that threatens them. They will be empowered to stop the rain, to turn water into blood, and cause all types of plague at will.

I think these are the two olive trees first mentioned in Zechariah.

Zechariah 4:2-3 & 11-14 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof....Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

In Zechariah the immediate application would seem to be to Joshua and Zerubbabel, but I am sure that they are types of others to come in reference to "the whole earth." Just as Joshua and Zerubbabel were standing as God's spirit-filled representatives to Judah at the time of Zechariah's ministry, these olive trees will be standing as God's spirit-filled representatives to the whole earth during the first part of that tribulation period. I believe the Spirit will be ministering on earth during the tribulation or 70th week, just as He did during the first 69 weeks of that time prophesied by Daniel. (See journal on Daniel 9.)

As the two Spirit-filled servants minister before the LORD, they are abundantly supplied to fulfill their responsibilities. It is an important truth to note that God's call always includes God's enablement.

Originally, I was hung up on the oil as representing the Holy Spirit. I think the truth is that these two olive trees as the source of oil are the source of spiritual enlightenment to the people to whom they are ministering. The olive trees are to the sides of the bowl, which is on the top of the lampstand.

Oil = Holy Spirit

Trees = prophets/witnesses

The trees will be empowered by the Holy Spirit to produce their fruit—to serve as intended in testimony of the truth of God's word.

Light = testimony

That we are talking about two special individuals becomes clear in the following verses. They are identified as "My" [in reference to Jesus] witnesses; the word for *witness* includes the implication of being a martyr—which will be true of them as we find out in the next several verses. They will prophesy (foretell and tell forth) the truth of God for 1,260 days or 3.5 years. They will wear the traditional "sackcloth" identified with the Old Testament prophets. Since they are not specifically identified by Jesus, we can only speculate as to their identity. I used to believe that it would be Enoch and Elijah since they are the two men that scripture reveals never saw physical death. Scripture tells us in **Hebrews 9:27** that "*it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*" This is, of course, excluding the generation that will "not sleep" as identified by Paul.

1Corinthians 15:51 *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed....*

David Guzik made a point concerning Hebrews 9:27. He stated that this "is a principle rather than an absolute, immutable law. For example, Lazarus and others were raised from the dead and apparently died twice."

Hebrews 11:5 states that Enoch was translated "*that he should not see death.*" I was also reminded that Enoch was not a Jew, and it makes better sense that the witnesses in Jerusalem be Jewish. I now think that Enoch is a type of the raptured church who will not die physically.

We are told in Malachi that Elijah will be sent before the Lord Jesus returns.

Malachi 4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

I tend to agree with many others that believe that the other witness will be Moses because the powers demonstrated by these two men are very similar to those that Moses and Elijah demonstrated during their time as prophets and because of their appearance together at the transfiguration.

Rev. 11:5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

Rev. 11:6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

Evidently, the truth that they will be proclaiming is going to make some people very angry—to the point that they will want to hurt the two witnesses. If they try to harm them, they will be killed by fire that projects from the mouths of the witnesses. This has to be literal fire since it will be able to kill/destroy the attackers. The witnesses will also have the power to prevent it from raining on earth, to turn waters into blood, and to strike the earth (including the inhabitants) with all types of plagues/calamities. They will cause these events at their own choosing.

Rev. 11:7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

Rev. 11:8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

The first phrase in verse 7 indicates that their testimony will be for a fixed time (as established in verse 3). At the end of that time they will be killed in a fight with the “beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit.” This is interesting in that so far, the only things we have seen ascend from the bottomless pit are the locusts. I hadn’t noticed this before, but this seems to connect the *beast* with the king of the locusts and would again connect to Satan.

The dead bodies of the two witnesses will be left on display in the streets of Jerusalem; they won’t even be given a burial. We know it is Jerusalem since it is identified as the place where Jesus was crucified. This verse seems to indicate that Jerusalem will be a big, influential and strong city at that time. Sadly, it is compared spiritually to Sodom

and Egypt—both known for worshipping themselves and idols and rejecting the one true God. This seems to indicate that although the Jewish people will experience great awakening and will turn to their Messiah during the tribulation, it will not necessarily be as a whole in the land of Israel proper.

Rev. 11:9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

Rev. 11:10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

The wording of this verse seems to indicate that people all over the world will be able to see the dead bodies of the witnesses in the streets of Jerusalem for 3.5 days. This is not at all surprising considering the technology available today. Evidently, the impact of their testimony and supernatural control of weather and nature have been felt worldwide since the people on earth in general will be rejoicing that they have been put out of commission. It seems their death will be declared a holiday worldwide; people will even send gifts to one another as they celebrate the death of these two individuals. Why? Because they tormented those dwelling on planet earth for 3.5 years.

Rev. 11:11 And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

Rev. 11:12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

After the witnesses' bodies have lain in the streets for 3.5 days, the Spirit of life from God enters into them and they stand up. This makes everyone who sees this happen very afraid. Emphasis is given that "life" comes from God.

The wording in the next verse is a bit unclear, but I believe it is saying that the witnesses hear a great voice calling out to them from heaven. I don't believe those on earth hear it—or just like when Jesus called Lazarus from the grave, if He hadn't specified Lazarus, all the dead in the tomb would have come forth (assuming it to be a family tomb). The wording is very similar to that used in Rev. 1:10 and 4:1, the voice of God. He tells them to "come up hither." The witnesses immediately ascend **up** to heaven in a cloud while the people on earth are watching. The ascending and descending to and from heaven often seem to be associated with the clouds.

Rev. 11:13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

Rev. 11:14 The second woe is past; *and*, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

In the same hour that the witnesses ascend to heaven there is a great earthquake in Jerusalem that destroys 1/10 of the city and kills 7,000 men. The word for "remnant" simply means the rest of the people left. Those left alive were terribly afraid; and, as is often the case when things get really bad, they turn to the God of heaven. We know that God says that all of Israel will one day be saved, and I think this is a major turning point in the faith of the Jewish nation.

We are told that this completes the second woe, and the third woe is coming quickly, soon afterward. This appears to be marking the midpoint of the tribulation, since the witnesses are on earth for 3.5 years and Jesus chooses this point to explain to John all that leads up to Satan's expulsion from heaven to rule on earth through the beast (whom I believe he indwells) for the last 3.5 years.

Rev. 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

When the 7th trumpet is blown, the inhabitants of heaven begin rejoicing in the fact that the eternal Kingdom of God ("our Lord and His Christ") on earth will soon be established. Never again will Satan be allowed to accuse and reign over mankind. This is, of course, with the perspective of knowing that there are a few battles left in the war; but the victory is sure.

Rev. 11:16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

Rev. 11:17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

Rev. 11:18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

John sees the 24 elders fall on their knees in worship before God. Notice what they say. They are giving thanks to the "Lord God Almighty," who is, always has been, and always will be. They are thankful that He is taking back total control of the universe

and planet earth. The wording indicates that He has been the ultimate power all along, but has allowed Satan the fruits of his small victory for a time in order to demonstrate His character and love and to draw out a people unto Himself for His pleasure (**Rev. 4:11**).

The elders appear to be talking about the saints and prophets and those that fear God's name in reference to beings distinct from themselves (cf 4:4, 5:9-10) affirming my thoughts on chapter 4.

Verse 18 is emphasizing judgment to come—both of believers and “those who destroy the earth.” The judgment of His servants is regarding rewards for service; for unbelievers it refers to eternal condemnation.

This whole section seems to be talking about things that have not yet been completed, but will be “soon.” Those rewarded (given wages) will be the prophets (forth tellers & foretellers), the saints (those who are holy, set apart, sanctified), and those who fear (are in awe of) and reverence God's name (authority, cause). Those destroyed will be those who are destroyers; they obviously have no respect for God and/or His creation.

Rev. 11:19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

Now we are told that there is a temple of God in heaven (which was hinted at earlier by the existence of the altar, candlesticks, etc.) The prophet Isaiah also saw the temple in heaven in a vision.

Isaiah 6:1 *“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.”*

There in the temple is the ark of His (God's) testament/covenant. I personally believe this is the ark that has been missing all these many years. I know that the tabernacle and temple and their contents were patterned on things in the heavens. But I believe the ark that was built during the time of Moses is the one that is associated with the promise of God's covenant to the Jews and is significant to the fulfillment of promise and prophecy. While on earth, the ark and its mercy seat were representative of God's throne. God's throne in heaven is unique. I believe the ark is now in heaven as a testimony to His covenant.

I also thought about the fact that God's throne on earth now is the heart of believers. The ark is no longer needed to function as originally intended. It's only validity now is as a testimony to God as a covenant-keeper.

When the temple opens, those on earth experience lightnings, voices, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail. This is the fourth major earthquake utilized by God in His judgment during the tribulation. This is almost identical to what happened with the opening of the 7th seal (and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.) I have heard it explained that the judgments run concurrently with one another, but I do not believe this. The revelation being written by John appears to be a complete narrative of what he witnesses and experiences in the order that he witnesses and experiences them. Scripture is written in accordance with the Holy Spirit's inspiration. The use of language specifying order is just as significant here as in Genesis 1. I don't think God is trying to confuse us.