

# Revelation 11 - The Tribulation Temple; The Two Witnesses; Trumpet #7

## IV. After These Things (Rev 4:1—22:21)

### (2) During the Tribulation (Rev 6:1—19:21)

#### (E) End of the Times of the Gentiles (Rev 11:1-2)

(a) The Command (11:1)

(b) The Court (11:2a)

(c) The Contempt (11:2b)

#### (F) Ministry of the Two Witnesses (Rev 11:3-14)

##### (a) Their Ministry (11:3-6)

(i) Its Duration (11:3)

(ii) Its Empowerment (11:4)

(iii) Its Activity (11:5-6)

(a) Fire (11:5)

(b) Drought (11:6a)

(c) Waters (11:6b)

(d) Plagues (11:6c)

##### (b) Their Martyrdom (11:7-10)

(i) Its Cause (11:7)

(ii) Its Place (11:8)

(iii) Its Contempt (11:9)

(iv) Its Celebration (11:10)

##### (c) Their Revival (11:11-13)

(i) Their Resuscitation (11:11)

(ii) Their Rapture (11:12)

(iii) Revival's Result (11:13)

(a) Earthquake (11:13a)

(b) City's One-Tenth (11:13b)

(c) 7000 killed (11:13c)

(d) Holy Fear (11:13d)

#### (G) The Seventh Trumpet (11:14-19)

(a) The Transference (11:14-15)

(b) The Praise (11:16-18)

(i) The worshippers (11:16)

- (ii) The worship's content (11:17-18)
  - (a) The Coming Reign (11:17)
  - (b) The Coming Justice (11:18)
    - (1) Nations rage (11:18a)
    - (2) Divine wrath (11:18b)
    - (3) Dead will be judged (11:18c)
    - (4) Saints will be rewarded (11:18d)
    - (5) Destroyer will be destroyed (11:18e)
- (c) The Anticipation (11:19)

## Revelation 11

(E) End of the Times of the Gentiles (Rev 11:1-2)

(a) The Command (11:1)

**1 Then** there was **given to 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**."

**1** Then there was given me [John] 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."

**1** Then I [John] was given a stick like a measuring rod. I was told, "Stand up and measure the Temple of God and the altar, and count those who worship there."

**1** And there was given me [John] 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.

- "Then" - *kai*, ties this passage with Rev 10, specifically to the recommissioning of John (10:8-11)

— John's first task after his renewed prophetic call is to provide information found in the "little scroll" related to the temple and the city where it stands

- "...was given" - *edothē*, - in Revelation, *edothē* ("was given") almost always refers to God the Father as doing the giving, but in this case it likely refers to the strong angel who dealt with John in 10:9-11

— John again becomes an active participant in his vision (Cf. 1:12; 5:4; 7:14; 10:8-10; 19:10; 22:8)

- "...rod" - *kalamos*, a plant with a hollow stalk that was often used as a measuring rod because of its light weight (Cf. Ezek 29:6; 40:5; 42:16-19; Mark 6:8; 3 John 13)

- "...measure" - *metrēson*, certainly John's purpose for measuring the temple was not to get an accurate square footage. We are never given any measurements in Scripture, so the purpose must be to glean other information.

— Because John was told to not measure the profane area (court of the Gentiles, v2), the measuring must be a mark of God's favor, which was over the *naos* (holy place) and the worshippers, but not over the rest of the temple complex, namely the court of the Gentiles.

— In other words, John's future prophecies will distinguish between God's favor toward the sanctuary, the altar, and their worshippers, and His disapproval of all that is of Gentile orientation because they will profane the holy city throughout the second half of the Tribulation (v2)

— The measuring is symbolic of God's evaluation, a statement of divine ownership and favor of the *naos* (Holy of Holies and Holy Place), the altar, and the worshippers (v1); the command to not measure the court outside (court of the Gentiles) and the subsequent mention that it will be given over and trampled by the nations (Gentiles) for 42 months (2nd half of the Tribulation) is symbolic of what John will prophesy next.

— John is told to measure three things:

1. The temple (the Holy of Holies)
2. The altar
3. Those who worship inside the temple

— John is told to perform a symbolic act (measuring), similar to some OT prophets:

- Isaiah walked naked and barefoot as a sign of Egypt's impending captivity to Assyria (Is 20:2-5)
- Ezekiel dug through the wall and carried his luggage out in the sight of Israel as a sign of coming exile (Ezek 12:1-7)

— The rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem is required for this verse to take place (Cf. Dan 9:24-27; referred to by: Jesus, Matt 24:15-16; Paul, 2 Thess 2:3-4; John, Rev 11:1-2; 13:15)

— In Ezek 40:2ff and Zech 2:1-2, measurement is in preparation of the Lord's coming to dwell upon the earth. Other occasions in Scripture where a similar measurement takes place include:

1. Millennial temple (Ezek 40:2ff)
2. Earthly Jerusalem, during the millennium (Zech 2:1-2)
3. New (heavenly) Jerusalem (21:5)

- "...temple" - *naos*, holy place; the Holy of Holies and Holy Place (vs. *hieron*, temple area as a whole)

— This is the temple that the Jews will build in Jerusalem either before or during the first half of Daniel's 70th Week (i.e., the Tribulation; Cf. v8; 13:14-15; Dan 9:26-27; 12:11; Matt 24:15-16; 2 Thess 2:4)

— The outer court and city are under Gentile dominion, while the *naos* is not (it's under Jewish control). This indicates that this event takes place in the first half of the Tribulation, prior to the abomination of desolation.

— God will not inhabit this temple, nor approve of it (Is 66:1-6); it will be destroyed in the 7th Bowl judgment

- "...those who worship in it" - John was to measure the worshippers as well, which means that God will *know* them, or perhaps *preserve* them

— He uses a figure of speech called a "zeugma," a verb governing more than one object, which does not fit the verb meaning. Measurement of a building is called for, but measuring people is not. If the command were to actually measure the people, the proper verb would be *logisai* (to "count" or "number")

— These worshippers evidently represent the future godly remnant of Jews, who will "worship" God in this rebuilt temple. Among them are probably those who will come to Christ through the ministry of the Two Witnesses (v13; Cf. Ezek 14:22; Rom 11:4-5,26).

— When Jesus returns at the Second Coming, He will build a new, millennial temple that will replace this Tribulation temple (Cf. Ezek 40ff)

[OT reference: Ezek 40:3-4; Zech 2:1-2]

Some allegorical interpreters view the temple as symbolic of the Church (Cf. 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21; 1 Peter 2:5), and believe this verse means that the Church will be protected in the coming disaster. However, if the temple is the Church, who are the worshippers, what is the altar, and why are the Gentiles segregated from it?

A Jewish Temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem prior to the midpoint of the Tribulation period (Dan 9:27; Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 11:1-2). However, where the Jewish temple will be rebuilt is currently where Islam's Dome of the Rock is sitting. So the Dome of the Rock must be razed in order for the Jewish temple to be built on the site.



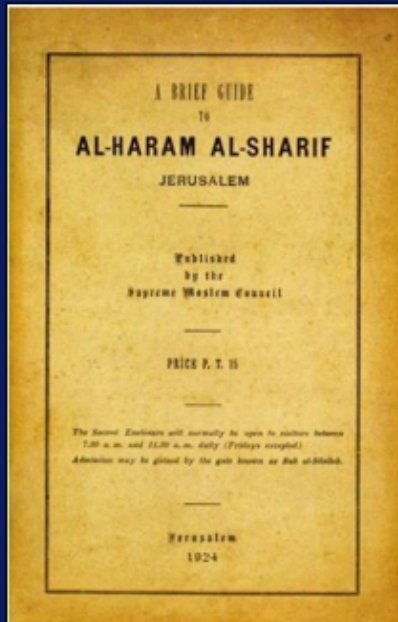


The Dome of the Rock is supposedly the third holiest site in Islam. It is the place where muslims believe that Mohammad ascended back to heaven (Allah) on a steed named Barack. However, Jerusalem is never mentioned in the Quran, but is mentioned over 800x in the Bible. Today, modern day Islam is trying to re-write history and claim that the Jews were never historically in Jerusalem, nothing of significance happened there, Solomon didn't build his temple there, etc.

The Rose Guide to the Temple, written by Dr. Randall Price, says: "The propaganda that accompanied the Antifada uprising beginning in 1987 included an official Islamic denial that the Jewish temple existed, and Jerusalem was ever a Jewish city. However, the denial of the Jewish temple was a recent phenomenon. In the English edition to the guidebook of the Temple Mount, written by islamic authorities in Jerusalem entitled, *A Brief Guide to Al-Haram Al-Sharif Jerusalem*, published in 1924 and unchanged in all later editions through the 1950s, we find the following declaration":

# A Brief Guide to Al-Haram Al-Sharif Jerusalem

published in 1924 (and unchanged in all later editions through the 1950s), p. 4.



“The site is one of the oldest in the world. Its sanctity dates from the earliest (perhaps from pre-historic) times. Its identity with the site of Solomon’s Temple is beyond dispute. This, too, is the spot, according to the universal belief, on which ‘David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.’”

Dr. Randall Price goes on to say: "This document provides evidence to show that despite the present public denial of the historicity of the Haram as the Jewish Temple Mount, Islam did not hold this opinion for most of its existence."

## How Will the Jewish Temple be Rebuilt Without Causing WWII?

According to Dr. Randall Price, there are three main theories about the location of the temple. The first is that the Solomonic temple resided exactly in the current location of the Dome of the Rock, thus the Dome of the Rock must be moved to accommodate a rebuilt Jewish temple. The other two theories hold that the actual site of the Solomonic temple are slightly offset from the Dome of the Rock, both of which would allow both holy sites to co-exist.

(b) The Court (11:2a)

(c) The Contempt (11:2b)

2 **Leave out the courtyard which is outside the temple and do not measure it, because it has been given to the nations; and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.**

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.

2 But don't measure the courtyard outside the Temple. Leave that out, because it is given to the nations, and they will trample the Holy City for 42 months.

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.

- "Leave out" - a separation between the portion that God recognizes and favors (Holy of Holies, altar, worshipers: the future believing Jewish remnant) and the portion He rejects (unbelieving Gentiles, who will trample down Jerusalem for 42 months)

- "...courtyard which is outside the temple" - the "outer court" or "court of the Gentiles"; this is the only place in the temple complex where Gentiles were allowed. They were not allowed to enter the "inner court" or the Holy Place.

— The reason why John was instructed to only measure the inner court but not the outer court is because the Jews have a "plumb line" or standard, the Gentiles do not

— The Jews' standard is the Abrahamic Covenant; John is instructed to measure the Jews because they have a standard, an agreement with God, so John measures Israel to ascertain its unbelief and disobedience, but doesn't bother with the Gentiles because they don't have a standard such as the Abrahamic Covenant (Cf. Ps 147:19-20)

- "...do not measure it" - *ekbale exōthen*, throw out, cast out; emphatic construction in the Greek emphasizes God's total rejection (Cf. Matt 22:13; 25:30; 3 John 10)

— To remain unmeasured amounts to the opposite of being measured; it marks an exclusion from God's favor. It marks the distinction between Jews, the future godly remnant, and the Gentiles, the wicked without God (Cf. 1 Cor 5:1; 1 Thess 4:5).

- "...it has been given" - *didomi*, aorist tense; the aorist (past tense) recognizes that Jerusalem came under Gentile dominion in the past from John's time of writing (70 AD) (Luke 21:20-24); another proof that Revelation was written in 95 AD (after the destruction of Jerusalem) rather than pre-70 AD

- "...nations" - *ethnos*, Gentiles, in contrast with the Jewish people. It is the group in rebellion against God, who will oppress the Jewish remnant and wreak havoc in Jerusalem for the 42 months before Christ's return.

- "...trample" - *patēsousin*, future tense; to harm severely through subjugation; to treat something holy with disrespect

— It does not predict utter destruction for the city as its continued existence is presupposed in v3-13

— Same word used by Jesus in Luke 21:24 to describe Gentile control over Jerusalem from the conquest of Jerusalem in 70 AD "until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"

— It indicates a continuous control, dominance and occupation by Gentiles up through the 42 months (of the outer courtyard and other temple precincts, but not the Holy of

Holies/Holy Place)

- *pateō* does not indicate a change from the normative Gentile control since 70 AD to a more intensified control

- The Holy Spirit used this word to show that although deep in sin, Jerusalem is still a holy city (Cf. Luke 21:24)

- Reminds us of Belshazzar and his disrespect of the temple instruments during his party (Dan 5:2); he took something that God said was holy and used it for something profane

- It appears from the Greek construction (the aorist of *didomi* with the future tense of *pateō*) that the Holy of Holies will be in Jewish control from some future point (the covenant with "[the] many" - Dan 9:24?) until the Abomination of Desolation, while the outer court and city itself will (continue to) be in Gentile control.

- This implies that the Two Witnesses and the measurement of the temple occur during the first half of the Tribulation; after the Abomination of Desolation, the inner court (Holy of Holies) will be under Gentile control (2 Thess 2:4)

- This is a fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy in Dan 7:21...that the "little horn" will make war against the saints and prevail against them until the "Ancient of Days" finally comes

- Daniel also prophesies that "the saints will be given into his (the Antichrist) hand for a time, and times, and half a time" (Dan 7:25), and that after these three-and-a-half years, "when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished" (Dan 12:7)

- "...the holy city" - the literal, earthly city of Jerusalem; no other city so designated (Neh 11:1,18; Is 48:2; 52:1; Dan 9:24; Matt 4:5; 27:52-53)

- The heavenly Jerusalem will not have a temple (21:22), so it cannot be referring to that future city that will come down out of heaven

- In v8, Jerusalem is also referred to "spiritually" as "Sodom" and "Egypt"

- "...forty-two months" - 3-1/2 years, half of the seven year Tribulation period (also described as 1,260 days, 11:3; 12:6); in this usage, it is referring to the second half of the seven year Tribulation period, a time when Gentile hostility against the Jews will be most intense (Dan 9:27)

- This is the most documented period of time in Scripture

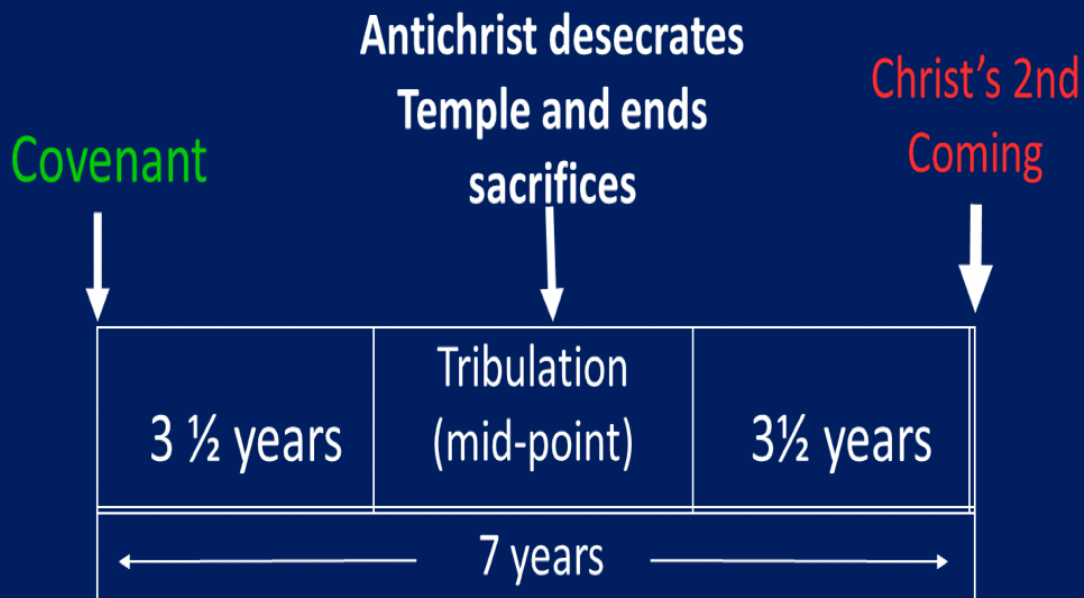
- The literalness of the fulfillment of the 69 Weeks (483 years) of Dan 9:25 is a guarantee of the literalness of the duration of the 70th Week (7 years)

- Anti-Semitism will peak after the Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel at the Abomination of Desolation, which occurs at the midpoint of the Tribulation period

- A preview of this event was Antiochus Epiphanes' desecration of the temple from June 168 BC to December 165 BC

[OT reference: Ezek 40:17-20]

# DAN 9:27 OVERVIEW OF TRIBULATION PERIOD



## Three-and-a-Half Years

Four phrases are used in Scripture for this time period:

1. "time, times, and half a time"
  - Dan 7:25 - Antichrist's actions against and control of Israel - 2nd half
  - Dan 12:7 - the duration in which the Jews will be persecuted - 2nd half
  - Rev 12:14 - God's care for Remnant at Petra - 2nd half
2. Half a week
  - Dan 9:27 - describing second half of Tribulation period
3. Forty-two months
  - Rev 11:2 - describing Gentile control over Jerusalem - 2nd half
  - Rev 13:5 - authority of the Antichrist - 2nd half
4. 1,260 days
  - Rev 11:3 - the Two Witnesses' time of ministry - 1st half
  - Rev 12:6 - the Remnant's duration in the wilderness - 2nd half

John's future prophecies will distinguish between God's favor toward the sanctuary, the altar, and their worshipers, and His disapproval of all that is of Gentile orientation because they will profane the holy city for half of the future 70th Week. So the measuring is an

object lesson of how entities favored by God will fare during the period of Gentile oppression that lies ahead.

### **Tribulation Temple**

God's plan through history involves different temples and different purposes. The Word of God reveals that in *this age* worshipers will not come to a specific location (John 4:19-21). But the Bible also indicates the future holds something quite different (Zech 14:16-17). The Tribulation Temple, erected in disobedience to God (Is 66:1-6) and "hijacked" by the Antichrist, eventually leads to a millennial situation wherein a Temple once again is part of God's plan.

Now, if we consider that one of the purposes of the Tribulation is to turn ungodly Jacob back to God (specifically: to acknowledge Jesus as Messiah according to Matt 23:39 and Rom 11:26), then we can expect that unbelieving Jews may be allowed to rebuild a Temple and to offer sacrifices there for a time (Dan 9:27). Although they will not be worshiping God according to NT truth (Is 66:1-6), this development signals the initial stage for God's redemptive work with Israel during the "Time of Jacob's Trouble," leading to their eventual conversion. The subsequent interruption of the orthodox Jewish sacrifices *in the Temple* (Dan 9:27) followed by the blasphemous acts of the Antichrist *in the Temple* (2 Thess 2:4; Matt 24:15; Rev 13:14-15) appear designed to get the attention of the elect Jews who will come to faith during the time period introduced by the events in the last half of the 70th week. Thus, the Temple erected in ignorance of NT truth is of great interest to God as it serves as a focal point of particular interest to Israel wherein the manifestation of the leader of the final rebellious Gentile government will take place in a way guaranteed to catch the attention of the Jews living at that time.

(F) Ministry of the Two Witnesses (Rev 11:3-14)

(a) Their Ministry (11:3-6)

(i) Its Duration (11:3)

3 **And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."**

3 And I will grant *authority* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

3 I will give my two witnesses who wear sackcloth the authority to prophesy for 1,260 days."

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

- "And" - *kai*, connects the account of the Two Witnesses with the measuring (and not measuring) of the temple



- The continuity of the two sections entails God's continued effort in getting His message out, in spite of increasingly hostile Gentile opposition
- The 1,260 days (v3) and the "42 months" (v2) are equal timespans, and also join the two passages
- "...I will grant" - *dōsō*, future tense; these are two prophetic voices in the future
- "...I...my" - the speaker is the same angel who spoke in v1-2 (Cf. v8 where the angels says "their Lord" which means the person speaking cannot be God or Jesus)
- At times in Revelation, angels become divine mouthpieces to the point of speaking the very words of God or Christ as through deity were the source (Cf. 22:7)
- "...my two witnesses" - *the* two witnesses of mine: emphatic construction
- The emphatic construction implies that these are Two Witnesses we already know about...they are important, significant; they are described as "the two anointed ones" in Zech 4:14.
- The OT required at least two witnesses as competent legal testimony to secure a conviction (Cf. Deut 17:6; 19:15; Num 35:30; Cf. Heb 10:28). Jesus also made two witnesses the minimum number to confirm a point of discipline in the Church Age (Cf. Matt 18:16) or to verify truth (John 8:17). Paul alluded to the need for two witnesses to validate a judgment (2 Cor 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19).
- It's possible/likely that the Two Witnesses minister in the area of the rebuilt Temple, and initiate Temple sacrifices and oversee Temple activities in the first half of the Tribulation
- "...they will prophesy" - *prophēteusousin*, future tense (see note on "I will grant" above); the Two Witnesses will communicate messages from God, including about future events
- These are specifically called prophets (v3,6) in the OT sense; they perform miracles
- The Holy Spirit will be involved in the ministry of prophecy during the Tribulation, primarily via the Two Witnesses. The other ministries are regeneration and sealing, both demonstrated in Rev 7.
- "...1,260 days" - see notes on 12:2,4 and also see note: **Two Witnesses: 1st Half or 2nd Half?** in 12:6
- "...sackcloth" - a symbol of mourning over coming judgment, and the sin and unbelief in Israel at this point in history, along with the lack of repentance
- Sackcloth signifies approaching judgment and needed repentance (Cf. Is 22:12; Jer 4:8; 6:26; Jonah 3:5,6,8; Matt 11:21)

### **Do The Two Witnesses Represent the Church?**

Some scholars, needing to find a reference or allusion to the church anywhere in Revelation, see these Two Witnesses as representing the Church. They point out that "lampstands" (*lychnia*, v4) are symbols for the church (Cf. 1:20), and that the beast would hardly make war with just two men. Other than these points, this belief falls only on an

assumption of symbolism throughout 11:1-13, which has never received definitive support [Thomas].

The evidence against the Two Witnesses symbolizing the church is easy to come by:

- Only individual persons where sackcloth (v3)
- Their description clearly represents them as individuals with specific power and distinct identities as two ancient prophets did (v5-6)
- The plural *prophēteusousin* ("they will prophesy," v3) opposes the notion of a corporate identity
- Their works, as described in v5, make a corporate identification impossible
- If the Two Witnesses represent the Church, that would require that all believers of the future undergo martyrdom, denying the possibility of survivors that will remain to populate the millennium
- Early church fathers were consistent in their understanding that the two witnesses were two individual OT prophets, although views on exactly who they were varied
- Jesus' words in Matt 16:18 ("**the gates of Hades will not overpower it**") preclude the beast out of the abyss from killing (prevailing over) the Church (v7)

There are many lines of evidence that prove that these Two Witnesses are two human beings, and should not be interpreted as symbolic:

- The word "witness" (*martys*, v3) suggests they are human beings. The verb means "to bear in mind" or "to remember." Thus, it means "one who remembers, one who has knowledge of something by recollection, and who can thus tell about it."
- The Two Witnesses function as prophets (v3), meaning they speak
- They are given power to kill their enemies (v5); they are heard, handled, and hated (v3,7,10); they have mouths, ears, and feet (v5,11-12); they wear sackcloth (v3), and after their martyrdom, John saw "dead bodies" (v8-9).

There is also no reason to believe that there are more than two of them (they don't represent a corporate body, such as the Church), for the following reasons:

- In Jewish law, two witnesses were sufficient to establish a fact (Num 35:30; Deut 17:6; 19:15; Cf. Matt 18:16; John 8:17; Heb 10:28). Since in the OT context the two witnesses are literal persons, not symbolic of a larger group of people, the same must be the case in Rev 11.
- Other numbers in the immediate context are best understood as literal: forty-two months (v2), 1,260 days (v 3), two olive trees and two lampstands (v4), three and one-half days (v9,11), one-tenth of the city (v13), seven thousand people (v13), second and third woes (v14), a seventh angel (v15), and twenty-four elders (v 16).
- The two olive trees and two lampstands (v4), an allusion to Joshua and Zerubbabel (Zech 4) who were two literal human beings, and do not represent a corporate body (such as all of the returning exiles).



- Those who believe that the Two Witnesses represent the Church believe that v12 describes the Rapture. However, the description of the ascension of the Two Witnesses differs greatly from the descriptions of the Rapture of the Church in 1 Cor 15:51-55; 1 Thess 4:13-17

See [The Two Witnesses of Rev 11](#) and [The Chronology of the Two Witnesses in Revelation 11](#) for more information.

Identity of the Two Witnesses		
CATEGORY	REVELATION 11	MOSES & ELIJAH
Protection	Rev 11:5	Num 16:35; 2 Kings 1:10-14
Activities	Rev 11:6	Ex 7:12-21; 1 Kings 17:1
Duration	Rev 11:3	Luke 4:25; James 5:17
Rapture	Rev 11:12	2 Kings 2:11

(ii) Its Empowerment (11:4)

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands **that stand before the Lord of the earth.**

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

4 These witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands standing in the presence of the Lord of the earth.

**4** These are the two olive trees, and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.

- The Two Witnesses represent Joshua and Zerubbabel (Zech 4:2,3,11-14) in being raised up for a similar mission as them. Just as Joshua and Zerubbabel sought to restore Israel to her Land (after the Babylonian exile), so will the Two Witnesses.

- The text doesn't state the work of the Holy Spirit in their ministry, but the allusion to Zech 4:6 demonstrates the Spirit's vital role
  - In Zechariah's vision, the olive oil from the trees provided fuel for the lampstand as an emblem of the light brought through Joshua and Zerubbabel. The oil pictured the working of the Holy Spirit. The seeming endless supply of oil from the two olive trees symbolize the automatic 24/7/365 anointing and filling of the Holy Spirit in order to carry out their ministry.
  - "...that stand before the Lord of the earth" - an allusion to Zech 4:14, but is a more explicit description of the source of their power
- [OT reference: Zech 4:1-3,11-14]

The meaning in this verse is not that the Two Witnesses are Zerubbabel and Joshua, but rather that whoever these two witnesses are, they are constantly filled with the Holy Spirit. Joshua and Zerubbabel did not have to wait for the Temple to be rebuilt to begin sacrificing on the altar which they erected on the ruins of Solomon's Temple. By the same token, the Two Witnesses will not have to wait for the third temple to be built in order to begin sacrificing on a divinely legitimate altar on the present ruins of the second temple (Cf. Ezra 3:2-3). What they will need, however, is supernatural protection to reinstitute the sacrifices (Dan 9:27) in the presence of enormous, even global, opposition (11:10).

The reason many believe the Two Witnesses will be present in the first half of the Tribulation is that "in the middle of the week he (the Antichrist) shall bring an end to sacrifice (*zevach*, bloody sacrifices) and offering (*minchah*, non-bloody sacrifices) (Dan 9:27). This refers to the entire Levitical system. The Antichrist will then replace the legitimate, God-honoring Jewish worship system, which only the Two Witnesses can inaugurate, with his own system, namely the Abomination of Desolation (Dan 9:27b; 12:11; Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 13:14-15). But the Antichrist cannot do this until the 1,260 day ministry of the Two Witnesses has been completed (11:7).

# Zechariah 4



(iii) Its Activity (11:5-6)

(a) Fire (11:5)

5 And if anyone **wants** to harm them, **fire** flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; and so **if anyone wants** to harm them, he **must** be killed in this way.

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.

5 And if anyone should want to hurt them, fire comes out of their mouths and burns up their enemies. If anyone wants to hurt them, he must be killed in this manner.

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.

- Their power to accomplish their mission is phenomenal: if someone even thinks about harming them, the Two Witnesses will have the power to devour them with fire from their mouths
  - "...wants" - *thelei*, present indicative which makes the assumption that someone will want to harm the two; better translated "if anyone engages in desiring"
  - "...fire" - *pyr*, alludes to Elijah's treatment of Ahaziah's messengers, though here the fire comes from their mouths, not from heaven (2 Kings 1:10-14)
  - God will use literal fire, from the mouths of these Two Witnesses, who speak on behalf of Israel
  - John (and James) actually asked Jesus for this ability with a vindictive spirit when the Samaritans (Cf. Luke 9:54-55) would not accommodate them because they were heading toward Jerusalem (which the Samaritans didn't believe was the correct location for worship)
  - The means by which they protect themselves is one of the clues to their identity. Fire was used to destroy Moses' enemies in the midst of Korah's rebellion (Num 16:35).
  - It is evident from the context that the "earth dwellers" will be the ones hassling the Two Witnesses; however, God has given them unique powers to protect themselves
  - No one will be able to kill them until God permits this at the very end of their ministry (v7)
  - "...if anyone wants" - *ei tis thelēs*, aorist subjunctive (rather than present indicative), meaning it is less likely to happen; better translated "if anyone may desire"
  - The consequence of both *thelei* (wanting to harm them) or *ei tis thelēs* (less probable harming) is apparently the same: death by fire from their mouths
  - "...must" - *dei*, a divine necessity; God will go to great lengths to protect these witnesses, for at least 1,260 days, so they can carry out their ministry
- [OT reference: Num 16:35; 2 Kings 1:10-12]

(b) Drought (11:6a)

(c) Waters (11:6b)

(d) Plagues (11:6c)

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**.

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.

6 These witnesses have authority to close the heavens in order to keep rain from falling while they are prophesying. They also have authority to turn bodies of water into blood and

to strike the earth with any plague, as often as they desire.

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.

- The additional powers, besides fire projecting from their mouths for protection, shows that these two witnesses are well equipped for their mission

- "These have...they have" - *echousin*, futuristic present tense pointing to the future authority that these Two Witnesses will have over the forces of nature

- "...rain will not fall" - Elijah stopped rainfall from heaven for a period of 3-1/2 years (1 Kings 17:1,7; 18:1; Cf. Luke 4:25; James 5:17), the same length of time that the two witnesses will prophesy on the earth (v3)

- "...turn them into blood" - Moses turned the Nile and all rivers in Egypt to blood (Ex 7:17-21; 9:14; 11:10; 1 Sam 4:8)

- "...strike the earth with every plague" - God used Moses to bring 10 plagues upon Egypt...

— The power to call fire from heaven, control the weather, turn water to blood and smite the earth with any plague evidently wreaks havoc on the "earth dwellers" (v10); they celebrate their deaths by giving gifts and celebrating

- "...as often as they desire" - the power of these witnesses will exceed the power of Moses and Elijah in the OT because they will have the power to exercise whenever they wanted to. Elijah had to pray fervently for God to stop the rain; Moses had to await divine command before he could inflict a plague.

[OT reference: Ex 7:19-25; 1 Kings 17:1]

### **Two Witnesses: 1st Half or 2nd Half?**

The person who does the best job arguing that the Two Witnesses will minister during the first half of the Tribulation is John Whitcomb; see [Whitcomb-The Two Witnesses - Revelation 11](#).

#### **1st Half:**

- Jesus commanded those who witness the Abomination of Desolation to flee to Judea. If the witnesses are still in Jerusalem, they are not obeying that command.
- If the witnesses ministered in the 2nd half, the 3-1/2 day celebration of their death would be after the Second Coming.
- Scripture paints the Antichrist's reign of terror as unopposed (13:4). How can the Antichrist call down fire from heaven upon his enemies (13:13) when the Two Witnesses are bringing fire from heaven upon theirs (11:5)?

- There seems to be an intentional distinction between the time of the Gentile occupation of the Temple's outer court and city, and the time of the Two Witnesses by means of different time units used: 42 months for Gentile occupation and 1,260 days for the Two Witnesses.
- It's possible the Two Witnesses may be instrumental in arranging the terms of the covenant, until they are killed by the Antichrist, which would allow him to break the covenant and terminate the sacrificial system.
- The Beast cannot go into the Tribulation Temple until the Two Witnesses are out of the way.
- Jesus stated in Matt 17:11 that "Elijah is coming first and will restore all things," (Matt 17:11, referring to Mal 4:5-6). Whoever Elijah turns out to be, his success (under God) in bringing Israel back to her Messiah must be during the first half because Isaiah prophesied that Israel will have given birth "to her children" as soon as her time of tribulation begins (Is 66:8).
- The "regenerated nation" (called "The Woman" in Rev 12) will flee into the wilderness and be nourished by God for 1,260 days (12:6,14; Cf. Is 26:20-21), which occurs during the second half. The "dragon" (Satan) will then "make war with the rest of her offspring, who keeps the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (12:17), presumably the 144,000 and multitudes of their Gentile converts.
- The ministry of the Two Witnesses are compared to the ministry of the two olive trees of Zech 4:3, namely Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the governor of the Jewish Remnant, who returned from Babylon to re-establish legitimate worship in Jerusalem (Cf. Zech 3:1; 4:6)
  - Interestingly, Joshua and Zerubbabel did not need to wait for the temple to be rebuilt to begin sacrificing on the altar that they erected on the ruins of Solomon's temple (Cf. Ezra 3:2-3). Thus, the Two Witnesses may not need to wait for the third temple to be built in order to begin sacrificing on a divinely legitimate altar.
  - However, what they will need is supernatural protection to re-institute the sacrifices (Dan 9:27) in the presence of enormous, even global, opposition (v10). This may be given with the treaty signed between the Antichrist and Israel that begins the 7-year Tribulation period.

## **2nd Half:**

- Most commentaries
- Dates mostly correspond to the second half of the Tribulation (see note: **Three-and-a-Half Years** above)
- During the Bowl judgments
- Culminating at Second Coming (and possibly overlapping into 75-day interval)

## **Neither:**

- A free-floating time period irrespective of the 1,260 day halves so often noted in Scripture
  - Such a use has no precedent or support from Scripture; no mainline conservative scholar holds this view
- The Two Witnesses may appear (?) immediately after the Rapture, when there are no believers remaining on earth. This assumes that God never leaves Himself without a witness in the world, the witnesses appear in Jerusalem to begin their ministry. By their testimony, they bring about the conversion of the 144,000 who will become witnesses during the Tribulation.

(b) Their Martyrdom (11:7-10)

(i) Its Cause (11:7)

**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.**

**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.

**7** When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the bottomless pit will wage war against them, conquer them, and kill them.

**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.

- "When they have finished their testimony" - neither the world nor the Antichrist will not be able to eradicate these Two Witnesses until after their appointed mission has been completed. The length of the ministry of the Two Witnesses on the earth is fixed by divine decree.

— The verse is not stating that when the beast will arise out of the abyss he will murder the witnesses, but rather when the Two Witnesses have completed their testimony, the beast, "the one who arises out of the abyss," will murder them.

— "have finished" - *telesōsin*, means they completed their work or attained their goal; the Greek word clearly indicates that these Two Witnesses, at the end of their 1,260-day ministry, will have completed their specific duty or appointed task

— God is in complete control of the events and the timing. The Two Witnesses are untouchable until their ministry is completed.

— Who else is invulnerable until their ministry is complete? - Us. As long as God has a purpose for us, we're protected.

- "...the beast" - *thērion*, the first reference to the "beast" in Revelation (36x total), second reference to the Antichrist (Cf. 6:1-2); the beast here is the same person as the rider of the white horse in 6:1-2, going out conquering and to conquer

— Note the definite article "the" meaning this "beast" is a figure well known to the write

— The word "beast" (*thērion*) is only used to describe the Antichrist or his system in Revelation (Cf. 13:1; 14:9,11; 15:2; 16:2; 17:3; 19:20; 20:10)

— The Antichrist is called "the beast" in Scripture because of his character, which is animalistic, without conscience, and without any knowledge or awareness of anything that is holy and precious in the sight of God

— The Greek word *thērion* describes a beast of prey, with a ravenous appetite, a carnivore like a lion or panther. It also denotes a cunning of unreasoning violence that acts according to its own cruel nature.

— We learn much more about the "beast" (the Antichrist) in Rev 13; 17, but this verse narrows his identification:

- The beast is not Satan because the metaphor used to describe Satan is a "dragon" (Cf. 12:3,9)
- In Daniel, beasts are earthly empires that oppose believers (Dan 7:18,27)
- The healing of his mortal wound (13:3,12) and his being an object of worship (13:8) indicate that he will be a ruler who represents himself as Jesus Christ
- The dual identities of both ruler and empire are not mutually exclusive as Scripture views the ruler of an empire as inseparable/synonymous with his empire (i.e. King / kingdom)

- "...comes up out of the abyss" - his origin speaks to his demonic character; he is both man (2 Thess 2:3,9-10; Rev 13:18) and demon (13:4)

— "abyss" - *aboussos*, the bottomless pit; the Antichrist came out of the abyss, and will be bound and thrown back into the abyss at the Second Coming (20:1-3); this is the same location where the demon locusts originated (9:1)

— It is possible in the chronology that the Antichrist endured a fatal wound just prior to the midpoint of the Tribulation, then rises from the dead (out of the abyss) to kill the Two Witnesses. At that point he would be able to enter the temple to commit the abomination of desolation. This rising from the abyss is also described in 17:8.

— Only two people in history are given the name "son of perdition": Judas (John 17:12) and the Antichrist (2 Thess 2:3). They are probably the only two people in human history who are possessed by Satan himself (John 13:27).

- "...will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them" - this will result in the physical death of the Two Witnesses

— "overcome them" - Matt 16 promises that the Church will not be overcome...proves that the Two Witnesses aren't from the Church Age

— Later, the beast will make war with the rest of the "woman's seed" (Jews) and overcome them too (Cf. 12:17; 13:7a)

— When Satan gets an upper hand in any culture, he immediately goes to war against two groups: Jews and Christians. This is why as our society flirts more and more with the



occult, and acts as if occultic phenomenon are ok, you can expect the culture to turn against two groups of people: orthodox Jews and Christians.  
[OT reference: Ex 7:3,7,8,21]

(ii) Its Place (11:8)

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

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.

8 Their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified.

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.

- "...*will lie* on the street" - the worst indignity for a dead person in that culture was to be left unburied after death (Cf. Ps 79:2-3)

- "...great city" - Jerusalem

- "...spiritually" - *pneumatikos*, indicates a comparative rather than literal meaning; a textual clue that John is using a metaphor to describe a literal city, not giving us the literal name of that city. John is likening a literal city (Jerusalem) to historical examples of opposition to God.

— Since the Holy Spirit specified a spiritual understanding of the identity of "the great city," it seems reasonable to assume that He would have specified a spiritual understanding of other entities in this book if He wanted us to interpret them in this way (Cf. 17:18)

- "...Sodom" - sin, sexual immorality, depravity; utter moral degradation (Gen 13:13; 18:20-21; 19:1-29; Is 3:9; Jer 23:14; Jude 7)

— Is 1:9; Ezek 16:46 gave the name Sodom to Judah in her worst days

- "...Egypt" - bondage, oppression, slavery (Ex 1:1-14)

— The thing that both Sodom and Egypt had in common was their unmitigated enmity toward the true God and His people

— The city will be similar to Sodom and Egypt in that it will be extremely wicked, morally degraded, antagonistic toward God, and oppressive towards God's people, because of the Antichrist's influence. Jerusalem and all of Israel will be in a backslidden condition during this time, much as they are today.

— You can't have a prophecy like this unless Israel is regathered in unbelief (Cf. Ezek 37:9-10)

- "...where also their Lord was crucified" - John adds "where also our Lord was crucified" to clarify his reference as Jerusalem

[OT reference: Is 1:9-10; 3:9; Jer 23:14; Ezek 16:49; Ezek 23:3,8,19,27]

Israel's Two Regatherings	
THE PRESENT (FIRST) REGATHERING	THE PERMANENT (SECOND) REGATHERING
Return to part of the land	Return to all the land
Return in unbelief	Return in faith
Restored to the land only	Restored to the land and the Lord
Sets the stage for Tribulation (discipline)	Sets the stage for Millennium (blessing)
Adapted from: Price, <i>Jerusalem In Prophecy</i> , 219	

(iii) Its Contempt (11:9)

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

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.

9 For three and a half days some members of the nations, tribes, languages, and nations will look at their dead bodies and will not allow them to be placed in a tomb.

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.

- "...peoples, tribes, languages, and nations" - a literary device to describe the entire world; every time these four words are used together, it has a global reference (Cf. 5:9; 10:11; 13:7; 17:5)

- The fact that the entire world will not allow the burial of the bodies of the two witnesses for 3-1/2 days shows their utter hatred and disrespect for these men, their ministry, and their testimony of Christ

- The same thing happened to Saul and Jonathan (1 Sam 31:10-13); their bodies were hung on a wall by the Philistines to show their hatred and disrespect of both men
  - The length of time the witnesses lie dead in the street (3-1/2 days) corresponds to their length of ministry (3-1/2 years)
  - "...will not allow" - the earth dwellers, from every nation, will demand that their bodies not be buried so they can celebrate their death (v10)
- [OT reference: Ps 79:2-3]

(iv) Its Celebration (11:10)

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

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.

10 Those living on earth will gloat over them, celebrate, and send gifts to each other, because these two prophets had tormented those living on earth.

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.

- This is the only instance of celebration on the earth in Revelation! A "Satanic Christmas?"

— An example of their unquenchable hatred and utter depravity toward Christians

- "...those who live on the earth" [2x] - the "earth dwellers"

— There are two types of people in Revelation: pilgrims, who will be leaving at some point, and earth dwellers, those who dwell upon the earth

- "...tormented" - *basanizō*, the Satan-inspired hatred of these earth dwellers to the Word of God and the testimony of the Two Witnesses will be to them as "torment." Apparently through their words of righteousness, these two witnesses have "tortured" the rest of the world.

— The special powers of the witnesses will bring suffering and death to the earth dwellers, but probably the worst torment for them was the troubling of the consciences over their sinfulness (Cf. 1 Kings 18:17; 21:20)

— The same Greek word is used of demons in Matt 8:29 who were fearful that Jesus was going to send them into judgment and torture (*basanizō*) them before the appointed time

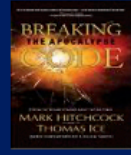
— It's also used of martyrs (Heb 11:35) who were tortured (*basanizō*) for their testimony of Christ

— This is how the world will view Biblical Christianity during the Tribulation period...not just as a difference of opinion, but as a disagreement so profound that it torments their souls, so they work overtime to shut the whole thing up.



## Thomas Ice

Thomas Ice, "Kept From the Hour," online:  
[www.pre-trib.org](http://www.pre-trib.org), accessed 4 September 2014, 2.



**"This phrase 'earth dwellers' is used eleven times in nine verses in Revelation (3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10 2xs; 13:8, 12, 14 2xs; 14:6; 17:8). As you examine each individual use...you will see that all refer to a special class of stubborn sinners who are set in their rebellion against the God of heaven. You will also find that the phrase is only used to refer to those during the tribulation period.** Therefore, since the future hour spoken of in 3:10 is set in contrast with the present set of believers in the church age, and the future 'earth dwellers' will be active during the time period in which believers are said to be kept from, it is clear that John speaks of the time or hour of the tribulation. This is why 3:10 is a clear promise that Christ will keep believers from the time of the seven year tribulation."

It is clear that if the "beast from the abyss" (v7; 17:8) kills the Two Witnesses, then his identification of "from the bottomless pit" must indicate that he has already, or more likely, just prior to this, been miraculously healed. At this juncture he is at his most emboldened, he executes the Two Witnesses, the second beast performs various signs and lying wonders, the first beast enters into the Holy Place and sits down, declaring himself to be God. Perhaps this occurs during the three and a half-day celebrations surrounding the death of the witnesses.

But with the resurrection and ascension of the Two Witnesses, along with the earthquake (v13), the power of the living God is overwhelming. Tens of thousands of the residents of Jerusalem give glory to the God of heaven, a sign of their belief in the true God and acceptance of Jesus as their Messiah. They heed the command of Jesus to flee to the wilderness (Matt 24:15). The Beast in all his fury over being upstaged, pursues them with all of his anger and power. Thus bringing us to the opening scenes of the second half of the Tribulation. See [Dean-Chronological Relationship of Revelation Judgments to Daniel's](#)

[70 Weeks](#) for further information on the chronology of the three septet judgments and how the parenthetical chapters and passages fit.

(c) Their Revival (11:11-13)

(i) Their Resuscitation (11:11)

**11** And 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.

**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.

**11** But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet. Those who watched them were terrified.

**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.

- The international celebration of the death of the two witnesses is short-lived...God miraculously resurrects them after 3-1/2 days. Once again, the "earth dwellers" are trumped by the actions from heaven...

- The prophetic past tense of the verbs of this verse pictures what is future as a completed fact

- "...breath of life" - an allusion to Ezek 37:5,10 where God sends the breath of life into dead bones, making them live again and stand on their feet

— This is a resuscitation, not a resurrection; God will breath new life into the two witnesses, but they will not receive their resurrected bodies yet. That will happen after the Second Coming (Dan 12:1; Rev 20:4-5; Cf. Lazurus, John 11:43-44).

- "...stood on their feet" - as evidence of their miraculous resurrection, the two witnesses stood up on their feet, just as Ezekiel describes the dry bones in his prophecy (Ezek 37:10) and the dead within Elisha's tomb (Cf. 2 Kings 13:21)

- "...great fear fell upon those" - the witnesses' resurrections will terrify the earth dwellers because these gawking God-haters will be able to do nothing to silence their enemies. Even killing them won't accomplish their goal.

— Murder is the ultimate weapon of mankind, but since murder did not work here, the earth dwellers will have no additional means to silence God's voice

— At this point, the earth dwellers are at maximum fear, not knowing how things could possibly get any worse

[OT reference: Ezek 37:9-10]

(ii) Their Rapture (11:12)

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

12 Then the witnesses heard a loud voice from heaven calling to them, "Come up here!" So they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them.

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.

- "...a loud voice" - probably the voice of Christ, who summoned John to heaven with the same words (Cf. 4:1)

- "...Come up here" - the same words uttered to John in 4:1 when he was called up to heaven to witness and document the future section of Revelation (Rev 4-22), except in this case their enemies will watch them ascend

- "...cloud" - the *Shekinah* glory of God; same "cloud" in which Jesus ascended (Acts 1:9); clouds will also encompass Church Age believers at the Rapture (Cf. 1 Thess 4:17)

- "...their enemies watched them" - Breaking News! A FoxNews exclusive? Same coverage as Matt 24:15?

— The Two Witnesses' ascension to heaven will be in full view of the earth dwellers. Their ascension will evidently be gradual enough for people to witness, as was Christ's ascension (Cf. Acts 1:9).

- With the Two Witnesses gone, this gives the Antichrist unobstructed access to the Temple to set up his image, causing the Abomination of Desolation (see note: **Two Witnesses: 1st Half or 2nd Half?** in 11:6).

### Raptures in the Bible

1. Enoch (Gen 5)
2. Elijah (2 Kings 2)
3. Christ (Acts 1:11; Rev 12:5)
4. Philip (Acts 8:39)
5. Paul (2 Cor 12:2,4)
6. John (Rev 4:1-2)
7. Two Witnesses (Rev 11:12)

The mid-Tribulational Rapture view believes v12 describes the Rapture of the Church (because they have to find the Rapture somewhere in Revelation). What they miss is that Rev 11 is about the Two Witnesses who arise during the Tribulation and walk around Jerusalem prophesying, while the entire world is watching. The beast (Antichrist) comes out (v7) and makes war with the Two Witnesses and kills them. Their dead bodies lay in the street rotting for three-and-a-half days, unmoved, and the earth dwellers enjoy a Satanic Christmas, exchanging gifts with one another. In v11, God raises the witnesses from the

dead, and in v12, "raptures" them to heaven, while the frightened earth dwellers watch. Verse 12 describes the rapture of the two Jewish witnesses, not the Church.

(iii) Revival's Result (11:13)

(a) Earthquake (11:13a)

(b) City's One-Tenth (11:13b)

(c) 7000 killed (11:13c)

(d) Holy Fear (11:13d)

13 And **at that time** there was a **great earthquake**, and **a tenth of the city fell**; **seven thousand people** were killed in the earthquake, and **therest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven**.

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.

13 At that moment a powerful earthquake struck. One-tenth of the city collapsed, 7,000 people were killed by the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

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.

- "...at that time" - *en ekeinos hōra*, literally "in that hour" or "within the hour"

- "...great earthquake" - this is the second major earthquake described in Revelation (6:12); one earthquake (8:5) will occur in heaven

— This earthquake coincides with the ascension/rapture of the Two Witnesses

— A much greater earthquake will come when the 7th Bowl is poured out (16:18-20). This earthquake appears to be local to the area in and around Jerusalem.

— The greatest fault line on the earth runs east of Jerusalem down the Jordan called the Great Rift Valley, running underneath the Dead Sea into Africa (Cf. Ezek 38:19, see notes there)

- "...a tenth of the city fell" - ten percent of Jerusalem will be destroyed by this earthquake

— When John wrote Revelation, Jerusalem was in ruins (from 70 AD destruction by the Romans), so this verse is a prophecy that Jerusalem would be rebuilt

- "...seven thousand people" - *onomata anthrōpōn*, meaning "names of men"; the idiom suggests men of prominence in the city

— The specifics given of the 10% destruction of Jerusalem and the 7,000 men who die shows that this event will be partial and ordinary. In John's day, the estimated population of Jerusalem was 120,000 [Robert Thomas].

- "...the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven" - another result of the resurrection and ascension of the Two Witnesses and the great earthquake in Jerusalem is that the living Jews who had not yet come to faith in Christ "glorify God"
- Many interpretations hold that the glory these people give to God is under compulsion, not from repentance. Other interpretations believe that "the whole earth" cannot follow the beast (Cf 13:3-4) if 90% of Jerusalem's population has repented.
- Others say that the inherently evil nature of the city at that time (Cf. v8) and the hardness of the earth dwellers (Cf. v10) preclude the possibility of genuine worship
- However, elsewhere in Revelation, giving glory to God is tightly linked to repentance (Cf. 4:9; 16:9; 19:7)
- "Giving glory to God" has a positive spiritual connotation elsewhere in the OT and in the NT too (Cf. Joshua 7:19; 1 Sam 6:5; Is 42:2; Jer 13:16; Luke 17:18; John 9:24; Acts 12:23; Rom 4:20; 1 Peter 2:12). The response of these Jews here living in Jerusalem at the time of these events is clearly the opposite of the response of the earth dwellers in 9:20-21.
- Apparently there are a great number of non-earth dwellers (the Remnant) in Jerusalem who are affected by the ministry of the Two Witnesses; after their resurrection and ascension and the earthquake, they give glory to God
- This is likely a point in the Tribulation when a great harvest of Jewish souls occurs (and just before the Abomination of Desolation on the time table)
- Their response to the final miracle of the Two Witnesses, their resurrection and ascension, is markedly different than the response from the "earth dwellers" (9:20-21)

### Timing of the Conversion of the Remnant

Our Lord stated that "Elijah is coming first *and will restore all things*" (Matt 17:11). Whoever "Elijah" turns out to be (see note: **The Identity of the Two Witnesses** below), his spectacular success (under God) in bringing Israel back to her Messiah *must be during the first half of the Tribulation*, for Isaiah prophesied that Israel will have given birth "to her children" as soon as her time of tribulation begins (Is 66:8).

Furthermore, the basically regenerated nation, called "the woman" in Rev 12, will flee into the wilderness and be nourished by God for 1,260 days (12:6,14; Cf. Is 26:20-21), namely, the last half of the Week. "The dragon" will then "make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (12:17), presumably the 144,000 Jewish evangelists from the 12 tribes of Israel and multitudes of their Gentile converts.

The crucial question, then, is this: ***by whose testimony is the nation of Israel brought into the blessings of the New Covenant of Jer 31:31-34 (Cf. Jer 32:37-41; Ezek 36:25-28)?*** And by whose witness are 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes led to the Lord, in order that, as our Savior promised, "this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in



all the world [during the last half of the Week] as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matt 24:14)?

The prophet Malachi provides the answer: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet *before* the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD [i.e. the final 42 months of the 70th week], and he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers" (Mal 4:5-6). Our Lord, of course, was referring to this final statement of the OT when He assured Peter, James and John that, "indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things" (Matt 17:11).

Some have mistakenly assumed that Israel as a nation cannot be converted until "they will look on Me whom they pierced" (Zech 12:10), namely, at Christ's second coming in glory. But our Lord insisted: "Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29). These words were spoken to Thomas who refused to believe until he could "see in His hands the print of the nails" (v25). Was Thomas converted when he saw the marks of his Lord's crucifixion? No, for he, like the other ten apostles, was already a born again believer (Cf. John 13:10-11). Likewise, Israel will be filled with contrition when they finally see the Savior whom they had crucified, and "will mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only son," with "all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves" (Zech 12:14). Doubtless, this will also be the occasion when they will cry out, "Surely He has borne our griefs...yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted" (Is 53:4-5). Thus, there will be at least a 42-month gap between Israel's conversion and the overwhelming sight of their pierced Savior at His Second Coming.

### **The Identity of the Two Witnesses**

The OT required two witnesses as competent legal testimony to secure a conviction (Deut 17:6; 19:15; Num 35:30; Cf. Heb 10:28). Jesus also made the number two a minimum to confirm a point of discipline (Matt 18:16) or verify truth (John 8:17). Paul too alluded to the need of a plurality of witnesses to validate a judgment (2 Cor 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19).

It has been established that Elijah will be one of the witnesses, based on a number of passages (Mal 4:5-6; Matt 17:11). But who will be Elijah's companion? Many have suggested Enoch (since both were "raptured"), but he would not be an appropriate witness with Elijah in a prophetic ministry directed exclusively to Israel. Moses would be a far more appropriate choice. For future apostate Israel, no man in Israel's history would have greater respect and appreciation than Moses. He is named 80x in the NT. He was God's great deliverer and lawgiver for Israel.

Reasons to believe the identity of the Two Witnesses are Moses & Elijah include:

- Moses and Elijah possessed the same powers demonstrated by the Two Witnesses:
  - Elijah: fire from heaven (2 Kings 1:10,12); shut heaven for 3-1/2 years (1 Kings 17:1, time span given in Luke 4:25; James 5:17)

- James and John would have duplicated Elijah's acts, but Jesus rebuked them (Luke 9:54-56)
- Moses: turned water into blood (Ex 7:19-20); struck the earth with plagues ((Ex 7:14—11:10, esp 7:14-18; 8:12)
- The ministries of both Moses and Elijah were unfinished:
  - Moses (Num 20:12; Deut 3:26-28)
    - Moses died mysteriously (Deut 34:5-6; Jude 9)
  - Elijah (1 Kings 17:1; 19:13-16; 2 Kings 2:11-12)
- Both were present at the Transfiguration - a "staff meeting" about the Second Coming? (Matt 17; Luke 9:31; 24:4-7)
  - Peter mentions in both letters an allusion that they were discussing the Second Coming (1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:6-18)
  - Moses represents the redeemed through death (Matt 13:43; Luke 9:30-34)
  - Elijah represents those that have entered the kingdom through translation (Rapture, 1 Cor 15:50-51; 1 Thess 4:13-17)
- Moses was the law-giver; Elijah was the law-enforcer
- Future appearances predicted in the OT (Moses: Deut 18:15,18; Elijah: Mal 4:5-6)

For more information, see: **Identity of the Two Witnesses?** in Revelation 33 The World's Hatred for Righteousness (Rev 11:9-13).

The "parenthetical insertion" after the 6th Trumpet and before the 7th Trumpet (10:1—11:14) is finished, and now we're back on the chronological path, starting with the 7th Trumpet judgment.

#### (G) The Seventh Trumpet (11:14-19)

##### (a) The Transference (11:14-15)

**14** The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is coming **quickly**.

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

**14** The second catastrophe is over. The third catastrophe is coming very soon.

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

- Rev 8:13 gave us three "woes":

- The first "woe" was the 5th Trumpet, where demon locusts were released from the abyss for five months to torture, but not kill, the earth dwellers (Cf. 9:1-12)
- The second "woe" was the 6th Trumpet, where one-third of humanity died (9:13-21)
- The third "woe" issues no judgment (v15-19), but a celebration. However, after the celebration, the 7th Trumpet unleashes the most severe of all judgments: the 7 Bowls. — This again shows the "telescoping" nature of these judgments, where the 7th judgment unleashes the next set of judgments (Cf. 10:7)

- "...quickly" - *tachos*, soon, imminent; in a short period of time; very little time will elapse between the 2nd and 3rd "woes"

— The contents of the third "woe" will not come until 16:1 with the 1st Bowl judgment

— The first two woes followed immediately after their respective trumpet blasts, but because the 7th Trumpet is of a much broader scope, a great deal of intervening explanation is necessary

— See note: **Timing Texts** and notes on 1:1

## **5 Non-Chronological Parenthetical Insertions**

1. 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Rev 7:1-17)

**2. Announcement of no more delay; Two Witnesses (Rev 10:1—11:14)**

**3. Israel's flight; two beasts, six scenes of hope (Rev 12:1—14:20)**

4. Gathering of the nations to Armageddon (Rev 16:13-16)

5. Babylon's fall (Rev 17:1—19:6)

The chronology of the events of Revelation picks up again (v15-19), before another non-chronological parenthetical insertion from 12:1—14:20.

**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.**"

**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."

**15** When the seventh angel blew his trumpet, there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The world's kingdom has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will rule forever and ever."

**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.

- John's visional location changes from earth back to heaven, to enable him to hear this song. The knowledge of the events celebrated in the following song of praise are limited only to heaven at this time.

— The scene John sees in heaven helps us today to connect events on the earth with the invisible powers that control them in heaven, and to view the earth's tragedies with a heavenly perspective

- One of the most important verses in the Bible to know in order to understand the entire theme of Scripture

— This verse communicates the process by which the Satan's kingdom of this world is being permanently transferred to become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ

- It's difficult to understand the significance of this verse and why there's a celebration in heaven unless we understand the condition of the earth at this time
- Going back to Adam & Eve, God vested responsibility and authority over the earth (Gen 1:26-28). God's original design was to rule the earth through a man, (the first) Adam, along with his wife and co-ruler, Eve.
- However, Adam stopped ruling over the earth and the animals and instead started listening to them (specifically a talking snake), and fell into sin
- The moment that sin occurred, Satan became the ruler of this world (Job 1:7; 2:2; Luke 4:5-8; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2; 1 John 4:4; 5:19) and the world has been under an authority hostile toward God ever since
- This verse announces the end of this ~6,000 year domination of the earth by Satan and his demonic forces
- "...the seventh angel sounded" - the 7th Trumpet judgment is an announcement rather than a judgment. It's an announcement that the kingdom of the world, ruled by Satan, is being legally transferred to the Lord and to His Christ.
- When the angel sounds the 7th Trumpet, as with the 7th Seal (Cf. 8:2-5), no earthly activity or judgment begins immediately. The blast of the 7th Trumpet yields a dramatic heavenly announcement (v15b) followed by a hymn of thanksgiving (v16-18). After the hymn begins an extended presentation, beginning in heaven and telling of the inner movements that lie behind the coming climax of human history (11:19—14:20).
- This is the trumpet of an angel, not the "Trumpet of God" which occurs at Sinai (Ex 19) and at the Rapture (1 Thess 4:16-17). The seventh angel yields seven Bowls of wrath.
- "...kingdom" - *basileia*, the unchallenged authority of God in heaven is coming to the earth in the form of a kingdom (Dan 2:44)
- Attempting to identify this "kingdom" as the Church is ridiculous because an abstract sense of this noun is impossible when "of the world" (*tou kosmou*) immediately follows, showing the scope in which this rule extends.
- The world-empire, once dominated by a usurping power (Satan), has now passed into the hands of its True Owner and Creator (in a proleptic/prophetic sense). Later celebrations also occur about the same transition of power/ownership (Cf. 12:10; 19:6).
- "...has become" - *egeneto*, a proleptic statement; the replacement of the kingdom of the world in fulfillment does not occur chronologically at this point in the series of John's visions. This event is future from the point of progress of the series of John's visions, but the verb views it as an already accomplished fact.
- The perspective of the verb tense is to a point in time after the action of the 7th Trumpet has run its course, which means after the 7th Bowl judgment (7th Trumpet includes the 7 Bowl judgments). Before this prophecy is fulfilled, John (and the Holy Spirit) must provide

extensive background (12:1—14:20) that is necessary to understand the 7th Trumpet's content.

— There are events predicted in Scripture that are so certain to take place that the Bible speaks of them in the present or even past tense, even though the actual event is still yet future (i.e. the believer's glorification, spoken of in the past tense, Rom 8:30)

— This is an announcement of victory. Satan had offered Jesus a shortcut (Matt 4:8-9), but Jesus did it the way the Father wanted it done

- "...Lord" - *Kyriou*, a title for God the Father; in the NT, *Kyrios* more often refers to Christ, but in Revelation it most often refers to the Father

- "...He will reign" - *basileusei*, "He" includes both *Kyriou* (God the Father) and *Kyrios* (Christ); the unity of the joint sovereignty combines into a singular. When the Father rules, so does the Son.

— Sequentially speaking, the kingdom of the Son (the millennial kingdom on the earth) will ultimately merge with the universal kingdom of the Father (Cf. 1 Cor 15:24,27-28)

— This eternal kingdom must include the millennial kingdom, Jesus' 1000-year reign on earth, since earlier promises to the redeemed include reigning on the earth (5:10). This earthly kingdom is the central theme of Revelation, as well as the entire Bible. It is the culmination of the Son's victory over sin, death, and Satan.

— OT anticipations, from which John draws many of his concepts, include the eventual passing of rule over earth into God's hands (Cf. Dan 2:35,44; 4:3; 6:26; 7:14,26-27; Zech 14:9). Paul also saw a future kingdom in two phases (Cf. 1 Cor 15:24-28):

1. The earthly 1000-year reign of Christ (20:1-10)
2. A second kingdom in God's new creation (21:1—22:5)

- "...forever and ever" - the eternal nature of this kingdom

— Dan 2:44 says that the kingdom God sets up will never be destroyed, but it will destroy all other world kingdoms, and it will endure forever

— Dan 7:14 says that His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away

— Dan 7:27 says that His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom and all the dominions will serve and obey Him

[OT reference: Ex 15:18; Dan 2:44-45; 7:13-14,27]

How can the kingdom of the world at this point become the kingdom of Christ when, as a matter of fact, the seven Bowl judgments must still be poured out? The answer seems to be that just as the seven Trumpets are contained in the 7th Seal, so the seven Bowls are contained in the 7th Trumpet. Therefore, the process of destruction of the earthly powers is already under way.

One of the themes of the Book of Revelation is how this world is transferred from the grasp of Satan to the earthly reign of Christ in the messianic kingdom predicted in the OT. In

other words, Revelation explains how the world will eventually transition from the rule that Satan has had on the world ever since the Fall in Eden (Luke 4:5-8; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2; 1 John 5:19) to the future time in history when God and His people “will reign upon the earth” (5:10b). Rev 11:15 captures this theme.

The mechanism for this transition of authority is the seven-sealed scroll in Revelation, which represents the title deed of the earth. As each seal is broken, another divine judgment comes upon the world, thereby progressively loosening the grip that Satan has had on the planet ever since the Fall of Man. This reality explains why so many of Revelation’s judgments bear a striking resemblance to the ten plagues of the Exodus.

### Ultimate Exodus

In Revelation, God will perform the ultimate Exodus by taking the entire world out of the Satanic bondage it has been under since the Fall. Each Exodus plague progressively weakened Pharaoh’s resolve to hold Israel in captivity. Pharaoh’s will was ultimately broken through the death of his firstborn as expressed in the 10th plague. In the same way, each divine judgment in Revelation will progressively weaken Satan’s grip on the planet until finally the entire world will be transferred into the glorious Messianic Kingdom. The death of God, the Father’s “first born” son, laid the groundwork for Satan’s ultimate defeat (5:9). Satan’s sentence will finally be imposed as the scroll is progressively opened by God the Son.

- Sores: 6th Plague (Ex 9:8-12) — 1st Bowl (Rev 16:1-2)
- Rivers to Blood: 1st Plague (Ex 7:19-21) — 3rd Bowl (Rev 16:4-7)
- Darkness: 9th Plague (Ex 10:21-23) — 5th Bowl (Rev 16:10-11)
- Frogs: 2nd Plague (Ex 7:25—8:15) — 6th Bowl (Rev 16:13)
- Hail: 7th Plague (Ex 9:22-26) — 7th Bowl (Rev 16:17-21)

See note: **Trumpet Judgments Repeating Egyptian Plagues** on Rev 8:7 on how the Trumpet judgments compare to the 10 Plagues of Egypt.

(b) The Praise (11:16-18)

(i) The worshippers (11:16)

16 And the **twenty-four elders**, who **sit on their thrones before God**, fell on their faces and worshiped God,

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

16 Then the twenty-four elders who were sitting on their thrones in God’s presence fell on their faces and worshipped God.

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

- Because of what will occur after the parentheses in Rev 12-14 are described, heaven erupts in an outburst of praise when the 7th Trumpet is sounded
- "...twenty-four elders" - Church Age believers who have been raptured to heaven
- The last time we heard from an elder in Revelation was in 7:13-14 when one of them explained to John who was represented by the numerous multitude in heaven
- This time, all 24 elders worship God, as they have done previously (Cf. 4:10; 5:8,14), this time "falling on their faces," dramatizing their worship more dramatically
- "...sit on their thrones before God" - a fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy in 3:21

The number one priority of every believer should be the worship and praise of Almighty God. We were created to worship the God who made us. The action of falling down on their faces demonstrates a clear understanding of God's greatness and the believer's humility before God. [Hocking]

(ii) The worship's content (11:17-18)

(a) The Coming Reign (11:17)

17 saying, "We **give You thanks, Lord God, the Almighty**, the One **who is and who was, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.**

17 saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.

17 They said, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to rule.

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.

- "...give You thanks" - a key part of our worship is giving thanks to God for His sovereignty, His power, His grace and mercy

— He wants thanksgiving not only to come out of our heart, but also out of our mouth (Heb 13:15)

— In the vision, God was *about* to do this...the Elders worship is anticipating the inauguration of that reign

- "...Lord God, the Almighty" - *kyrie ho theos ho pantokratōr*, stresses that no one can resist God's power and sovereignty, which was now evident; this title is used 7x in Revelation (Cf. 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6; 21:22)

- "...who is and who was" - emphasizes God's uninterrupted existence in the present and the past, which makes His endless reign possible

- "...because" - *hoti*, gives the reason for their thanksgiving to God

- "...You have taken" - *perfect tense*, meaning His control and reign will be permanent

- "...Your great power" - the final and overwhelming display of power through which God will overwhelm His enemies; refers to the final "woe" or the seven Bowl judgments
- Up to this point, God has allowed a defeated power, Satan, to control this world. But after the 7th Trumpet judgment plays out through the seven Bowl judgments, His direct, permanent power will be in place
- "...have begun to reign" - *ebasileusas*, ingressive first aorist active indicative, which indicates that it (the reigning) is something that has now begun; the eviction proceedings for Satan have begun, and Jesus has begun to reign
- The kingdom that Jesus told His disciples to pray for ("Thy kingdom come," Matt 6:10) has now arrived
- Until this time, God had allowed powers hostile to His people to control the earth, but now He will begin to rule directly
- Even though there is approximately three-and-a-half years to go in the Tribulation chronologically, proleptically the 24 Elders are so certain this is going to happen that they're praising God for a reign that hasn't started yet
- Another example of the prophetic past tense: the event is so certain that throughout this passage, it is repeatedly spoken of as already having taken place

(b) The Coming Justice (11:18)

- (1) Nations rage (11:18a)
- (2) Divine wrath (11:18b)
- (3) Dead will be judged (11:18c)
- (4) Saints will be rewarded (11:18d)
- (5) Destroyer will be destroyed (11:18e)

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."

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."

18 The nations were angry, but the time for your wrath has come. It is time for the dead to be judged— to reward your servants, the prophets, the saints, and all who fear your name, both unimportant and important, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

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.

- "...the nations were enraged" - the Elders continue to anticipate the beginning of Messiah's reign on the earth by foreseeing the raging response of unbelieving Gentiles (Cf. 16:14,16,19; 20:8-9; Ps 2:1,5,12), followed by the outpouring of God's holy wrath

— Ps 2:1 asks, Why are the nations restless and the people plotting in vain?

— "were enraged" - *ōrgisthēsan*, the hostility of the nations against God; the Greek word is from the root word *orgē*, meaning passion/emotion without limits. This word is used to describe God's wrath toward this group (see note below).

— Their wrath against God is quite different than the wrath of God by which these same people were terrified (Cf. 6:17). The wrath of the earth dwellers will culminate by assembling a great army to oppose God [2x] (Cf. 16:14,16,19; 20:8-9)

— The nations are upset because they are foolishly plotting among themselves to create a world with no place for God: the New World Order (the Great Reset) that is coming. They want to have their own way, to cast off all restraint.

— This world doesn't want God, they want no place for God in their hearts, minds or in their worlds. Why? Because Satan is the orchestrator of the New World Order.

— God will give them their desire...the result of their "utopia" is Rev 17-18. Their anger will lead to Armageddon.

- "...Your wrath came" - *orgē*, passion without limits; we get many sexual terms from this Greek word, but here it means the unbridled wrath and anger of Almighty God; the same Greek word is used many times in Revelation to describe events (6:16-17; 11:18; 15:1,7; 16:19)

— *Orgē* is the consistent Greek word used throughout the NT to prophesy God's wrath (Cf. Matt 3:7; Luke 3:7; Rom 2:5,8; 5:9; 1 Thess 1:10; 5:9)

- "...the time came" - *ēlthen*, indicates "the right time or season" (Cf. Mark 11:13; Luke 21:24); God's judgment only comes when the time is ripe

— This "perfect timing" also cover the subsequent verbs "to reward" and "to destroy"

— In this song of praise, the elders recognize that in addition to God's perfect timing in His judgments, it is also the perfect time/season to give rewards and to destroy those who destroy the earth

- "...dead to be judged" - a reference to Great White Throne judgment (20:12-13), when the Book of Life will be opened and the dead will be resurrected and judged by the things written in the books, according to their deeds

— However, the Great White Throne judgment is a judgment that only includes believers; the "dead" in this verse is not as specific to only include non-believers.

— After the 1000-year reign of Christ, every unbeliever who ever lived will be placed in a resurrected body and brought before the Throne of God to face judgment for their works.

Every one of their works will be judged insufficient, and they will be thrown into the Lake of Fire for eternity.

— The unbelieving dead right now are in a place of incarceration (*Hades*), being tormented (Luke 16:23-24), but that is yet the final judgment

— The dead without Christ are under God's wrath now, but the final sentence hasn't yet been rendered; Jude 7 says that they are "undergoing (present tense) the punishment of eternal fire"

- "...reward Your bond-servants" - this is an answer to the prayer of the martyrs of the 6th Seal judgment (6:9-11): the wicked are being judged and the righteous are being exalted and rewarded

— "bond-servants" - *doulos*, refers to believers; "bond servants" are John's original audience for the Book of Revelation (1:1)

- "...destroy" [2x] - *diaphtheiro*, corrupt; the phrase literally means "destroy them which corrupt the earth"

— The "perfect time" when the dead are judged and the faithful are rewarded will also be the occasion of the destruction of the earth's destroyers

— This is not an ecological statement, but referring to those who follow the one called the Destroyer

— Man cannot be an acceptable steward of the earth/environment if he denies the Owner/Creator

— Since the Fall, the earth is in travail (Cf. Rom 8:19-23); it is in bondage because of sin (Gen 3:17). But when the kingdom comes, God is not only going to liberate the planet, but He's going to destroy the one who destroyed the planet (Satan).

[OT reference: Ps 2:1-3; 46:6; 115:13]

### **Satan's Progressive Defeat**

1. Initial eviction from heaven (Is 14:12-15; Ezek 28:12-17)
2. Eden (Gen 3:15)
3. Pre-diluvian world (1 Peter 3:19-20)
4. Cross (John 12:31; 16:11; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14; 1 John 3:8)
5. Midpoint of the Tribulation (Rev 12:9)
6. Beginning of the Millennium (Rev 20:2-3)
7. End of the Millennium (Rev 20:10)

### **Is the 7th Trumpet the "Last Trump"?**

Mid-tribulationists try to correlate the "last trump" of 1 Cor 15:52 and 1 Thess 4:16 with the 7th Trumpet in Revelation. However, 11:15 does not state that this is the last trumpet...in fact, we have to infer v15 is the 7th Trumpet as the verse does not state this specifically. In

addition, the 7th Trumpet is the seventh in a series of judgments, but it is not the last judgment in the series, as seven more judgments follow.

The "last trump" reference in 1 Cor 15 is singular, referring to one judgment, not a sequence of seven. There is no ground for identifying the "trump" in 1 Cor 15:52 with the 7th Trumpet of 11:15. The Trumpets in Revelation introduce fearful judgments upon the world and mankind; the "last trump" of 1 Cor 15:52 calls the dead in Christ out of their graves and summons both the ones raised and the believers still living, into the Lord's presence. It simply refers to the last trump we'll hear before we're changed.

The term last trump refers to the fact that the trumpet call of God from 1 Thess 4:16 will signal the end of the Church Age, at which time the Church will disappear from Earth. In 1 Thess 1:10 Paul had already said Jesus would rescue the Church from the time and place of God's wrath (which began in Rev 6), so he would have been contradicting himself by referring to the 7th Trumpet in 11:15 as the last trump.

There are a number of observations which make it impossible for one to correlate the "last trump" with the 7th Trumpet judgment:

1. The trumpet of 1 Cor 15:52 sounds before the wrath of God descends, while the chronology of Revelation indicates that the trumpet in 11:15 sounds at the end of the time of wrath.
2. The trumpet that summons the Church is called the *trump of God*, while the 7th Trumpet is an angel's trumpet.
3. The trumpet for the Church is singular. No trumpets have preceded it so that it can not be said to be the last of a series. The trumpet that closes the Tribulation is clearly the last of a series of seven.
4. In 1 Thess 4 the voice associated with the sounding of the trumpet summons the dead and the living and consequently is heard before the resurrection. In Revelation, while a resurrection is mentioned (11:12), the trumpet does not sound until after the resurrection, showing us that two different events must be in view.
5. The trumpet in 1 Thess issues in blessing, in life, in glory, while the trumpet in Revelation issues in judgment upon the enemies of God.
6. In the Thessalonian passage the trumpet sounds "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." In 10:7 the indication is that the 7th Trumpet shall sound over a continued period of time, probably for the duration of the judgments that fall under it, for John speaks of the angel that shall "begin to sound."
7. The trumpet in 1 Thess is distinctly for the Church. Since God is dealing with Israel in particular, and Gentiles in general, in the Tribulation, this 7th Trumpet, which falls in the period of the Tribulation, could not have reference to the Church without losing the distinctions between the Church and Israel.

8. The passage in Revelation depicts a great earthquake in which thousands are slain, and the believing Remnant that worships God is stricken with fear. In the Thessalonian passage there is no earthquake mentioned.
9. While the Church will be rewarded at the time of the Rapture, yet the reward given to "thy servants the prophets, and to the saints" cannot be that event. The rewarding mentioned in 11:18 is seen to take place on the earth after the Second Coming of Christ, following the judgment on His enemies. Since the Church is rewarded in the air, following the Rapture, these must be two distinct events.
10. The word "trumpet" (*salpigx*) is used in both the 1 Cor 15:52 and 1 Thess 4:16 passages, but is not found in the 11:15-18 passage. We must infer from 8:2 that this is the 7th Trumpet.

(c) The Anticipation (11:19)

**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**.

**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.

**19** Then the Temple of God in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen inside his Temple. There were flashes of lightning, noises, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

**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.

- This chapter began with man's temple, a temple rebuilt by the Jews in Israel, out of nationalistic pride (v1-2). The chapter ends with God's temple in heaven, from which the tabernacle was patterned (Cf. Heb 8:5).

- This verse is the response to the song by the 24 Elders in v17-18

- "...was opened" - *ēnoigē*, a proleptic statement; the opening of this temple is likely also described in 15:5, where the chronological progression resumes and the seven Bowl judgments are introduced

— Symbolically, the opening of the temple in heaven means that after the series of judgments are completed, human beings will enjoy unmediated fellowship with God (Cf. 21:3)

- "...ark of His covenant" - corresponds to the rewarding of the faithful (v18); the cosmic disturbances (flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm) corresponds to the outpouring of God's wrath (also v18)

- The ark of His covenant symbolizes God's presence and the place of atonement (Cf. Lev 16:2ff; Heb 9:3ff; 10:20). It was located behind the second veil in the temple, in the Holy of Holies. This scene is of the heavenly counterpart of the earthly ark. The original of the sacred things of the OT reside in heaven.
- This vision shows that God is resuming His dealings with Israel and would soon fulfill His covenant promises to that nation; the Ark is always associated with Israel, never the Church
- This is the first clue as to the identity of the woman in Rev 12
- The "original" Ark *has always been in heaven*: the one on the earth was just a replica (Heb 9:23-24)
- The last reference to the Ark is in 2 Chr 35:3. See [Ark of the Covenant: A Relic with a Future?](#) for conjectures on what may have happened to it after that time.
- It is the view of some that the *Mercy Seat* will be the very throne that Christ will reign from during the Millennium
- "...a great hailstorm" - cosmic disturbances increase in intensity and magnitude in anticipation of each septet set of judgments; as humanity is more entrenched in their disobedience and unbelief, God continues to "turn up the heat" on the judgments:
  - At the anticipation of the opening of the seven Seals (4:5), there were "flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder" (no earthquake or great hailstorm)
  - At the anticipation of the blowing of the seven Trumpets (8:5), there were "peals of thunder and sounds, and flashes of lightning and an earthquake" (no hailstorm)
  - At the anticipation of the seven Bowls being poured out (11:19), there are "flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder, and an earthquake, and a great hailstorm"

There is no revelation in this passage (v15-19) of the *judgment* announced here by the blowing of the 7th Trumpet. This passage is anticipatory...the record of this judgment appears in Rev 16. There we have a prophecy of seven Bowl judgments. It appears that as the seven Trumpet judgments were a revelation of the 7th Seal judgment, so the seven Bowl judgments will be a revelation of the 7th Trumpet judgment.

Once we understand the role of 11:14-19, how it anticipates the overthrow of Satan from his ruling and reigning over the earth through the seven Bowl judgments, we can then understand the events described in Rev 12-14.

Rev 12-14 describes a counter-move of Satan, trying to stop the 7th Trumpet judgment that is described in 11:14-19. God makes a move, then Satan makes a move, just like a high-stakes chess match. If you're a student of history or up to speed on what is really happening in our world today, you can see this happening all around us.

For example, WW1 prepared the land of Israel for the return of the Jews; WW2 prepared the Jews to return to the land. In WW1, Israel was given a legal right to their ancient

homeland, as a result of the Balfour Declaration (and other things). Satan then made his move, raising up a dictator by the name of Adolf Hitler, who sought to exterminate every living Jew on earth, so that none of them could return to the Land, in what he called his "Final Solution" so there won't be any Jews left to go back into the land that was just created for them and was legally theirs.

In 11:14-19, God is announcing that His kingdom is coming. Rev 12-14 describes Satan's counter-move to stop the kingdom from coming to the earth and defeating him. Rev 12 outlines Satan's desire to exterminate Israel, and his plans to do so, preventing the kingdom from coming. Rev 13 describes the two men Satan will use, the Antichrist (beast) and False Prophet. After two chapters of Satan, Satan, Satan in Rev 12-13, Rev 14 is a nice counter-balance, with six scenes in heaven showing that God is still in control.

How can Satan stop God? He can't, but he thinks he can because his mind is deluded. He will attempt to exterminate the Jewish race, thereby preventing the kingdom through coming. He will prevent the Jews from fulfilling Matt 23:39, which would prevent the kingdom from coming to earth. That won't happen, but that doesn't mean that Satan will not pull out all the stops in his attempts to stop it from happening.