

“Measuring the Temple and the Two Witnesses”
Revelation 11:1-6

Last time: A Different Kind of Chapter (Rev. 10): Angel, Thunder, Mystery, and Command

Today: Measuring the Temple and the Two Witnesses

We are continuing to study the second intermission of Revelation:

- The first intermission: before the opening of the seventh seal: the 144,000 and the Great Multitude
- Before the blowing of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 10 and 11)

Three themes of Revelation 11:

1. As our Great Shepherd went through suffering, so His sheep must go through suffering.
2. As those in the past who reject the gospel were punished (AD 70), so those who reject the gospel in the future will be punished.
3. As our Great Shepherd was victorious, so His sheep will ultimately be victorious.

Outline:

- 11:1-2, John Is Commanded to Measure the Temple
- 11:3-6, The Two Witnesses Are Introduced

11:1/ “Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, ‘Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there.’”

1. Temple: The place where God’s special presence dwells (yet, He is also omnipresent)
 - a. The physical temple in Jerusalem (Solomon’s, Zerubbabel’s)
 - b. The resurrected body of Jesus Christ (Jn. 2:19-22)
 - c. The spiritual temple (believers, 1 Cor. 3:16-17)
 - d. The heavenly temple of the present (Rev. 11:19)
 - e. God’s presence (Rev. 21:22)
2. Altar: The place of sacrifice (goats, sheep, bulls, pigeons); the true means of worship
 - a. Where is the believer’s altar today?

11:2/ “But do not measure the court outside the temple...”

What is the meaning of John measuring the temple and the trampling of the city for forty-two months according to the four views?

1. Preterist (**past**):
 - a. Measuring the temple of God: The literal temple is about to be destroyed, so John is measuring it—destruction for unbelievers **and** salvation for believers.
 - b. Trampling the city for forty-two months: The approximate 3 ½ year length of the Jewish War or Nero’s persecution of believers (AD 70)
2. Historicist (**timeline**):
 - a. Measuring the temple of God: The spiritual temple, the church (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19). The measuring rod is the symbol of authority given to Protestant Reformers to determine the worship that agrees with Scripture.

- b. Trampling the city for forty-two months: Year-for-a-day principle = 1,260 years; The papacy persecuted true believers (e.g., Waldensians, Lollards, Hussites, etc.).
- 3. Idealist (***spiritual***):
 - a. Measuring the temple of God: The spiritual temple (the church); The court that is not measured is symbolic for false believers.
 - b. Trampling the city for forty-two months: A limited period of time of persecution, beginning with Christ's resurrection and concluded at His return.
- 4. Futurist (***future***):
 - a. Measuring the temple of God: The future rebuilt temple in Jerusalem; John is measuring future Jewish believers whom God will save (Zech. 12-14).
 - b. Trampling the city for forty-two months: First or second half of the Tribulation

11:3/ "And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

Who or what are the two witnesses according to the four views?

- 1. Preterist (***past***): Symbolic for civil and religious government in AD 70; Note Zech. 4, where two olive trees symbolize the head of the state (Zerubbabel) and the head of the church (Joshua).
- 2. Historicist (***timeline***): The small number of believers who stood against the pope; Fire proceeding from their mouths is understood as symbolic (Jer. 5:14).
- 3. Idealist (***spiritual***): Symbolic for the church witnessing; Jesus always sent out two witnesses at a time (Lk. 10:1).
- 4. Futurist (***future***): Symbolic for two witnesses; two actual men who prophesy and perform tremendous miracles
 - a. Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kgs. 2:11)
 - b. Moses and Elijah
 - i. The same kind of miracles are associated with these two men.
 - ii. Mal. 4:5, Elijah was promised to return.
 - iii. Dt. 34:6, Jd. 1:9...a future use for the body of Moses?
 - c. Two unknown men of the future