

Chapter summary - And now let us reflect upon the fact that blessing to earth's nations waits upon the condition of Israel, the elect nation. Christ will come, and "will turn away ungodliness from Jacob" and the receiving into favor of national Israel, will be as "life from the dead" for "the world": as Paul so clearly sets forth in Romans 11:26, 15; and James, in Acts 15:16, 17; as also all the prophets.

But these same prophets with one voice witness that before Israel can become a joy in the whole earth, they must first taste the full bitterness of rejecting their true Messiah. The "false shepherd" must come. Apostate Israel will make a "covenant with death" and a treaty with God's great enemy. The last state of "Israel after the flesh" will become "worse than the first."

But the counsels of God are ever settled and His word faithful. So that we shall see the Lord in Revelation 11 commanding John to measure "the Temple of God," with its altar and worshippers-even when the nation is apostate and the city "as Sodom"!

And the heavenly mind regarding Israel sees her as in Revelation 12:1; though her future experience on earth will be terrible (12:13-16). And a remnant will stand upon Mount Zion to sing heavenly praise! (14:1-5)

The two great prophets or "witnesses" whose testimony preserves Israel from doom, and lays the foundation of the fear of the Lord in the remnant, will now be considered.¹

John is now given a rod with which to measure the Jerusalem temple and its altar (11:1). He is told that the Gentiles will dominate the city of Jerusalem for 42 months, the same length of time that John says the beast (the Antichrist) will rule (cf. 13:5-7). During this period two witnesses, men given power to bring drought and destroy those who attack them, will serve as God's witnesses in the holy city (11:2-6). At the end of that time they will be killed, and the evil inhabitants of earth will celebrate their deaths (vv. 7-10). Three and a half days later they will return to life and be lifted up into heaven, while the earth quakes and terrified survivors are forced to acknowledge God's hand at work (vv. 11-14).²

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 **COMMENTARY:**

¹ Newell, *The Book of the Revelation*, pp. 145, 146

² Richards, *The Bible Reader's Companion*, Logos Library System.

6. The two witnesses appear before the seventh trumpets sounding, (11:1-13) - *"TWO SAINTS WHO REALLY KNOW HOW TO TELL IT LIKE IT IS!"*

1) The arrival, abilities and purpose of the two witnesses, (1-6)

 **INTERPRETATION:**

- ¹ (John continues the parenthetical commentary begun in chapter 10), **Then I** (John), **was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel** (probably the mighty angel in chapter 10), **stood, saying, "Rise and (go), measure the** (rebuilt), **temple** (the inner temple complex, i.e., the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies), **of God, the altar** (where the reestablished Levitical sacrifices will be made), **and those** (Jews), **who worship there**, (the only ones though who can truly worship there are the remnant Jewish believers).
- ² **"But leave out the** (outer temple), **court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for** (the reason being), **it has been given to** (or it will be under the control of), the Gentiles. **And they will** (maintain this control and), **tread³ the holy city** (Jerusalem), **underfoot for forty-two months**, (3 1/2 years).
- ³ **"And** (during this time of Gentile domination), **I** (God), **will give power** (authority), **to my two** (true and godly), **witnesses⁴ and they will prophesy** (proclaim, preach, warn the people for), **one thousand two hundred and sixty days** (3 1/2 years), **clothed in sackcloth"** (to symbolize their mourning and distress over the situations and circumstances of the day).⁵
- ⁴ **These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands** (symbolizing an abundance of olive oil so that their light of truth will not go out while), **standing before the God of the earth**, (standing as God's true representatives/ambassadors on the earth).
- ⁵ **And** (not only that, but), **if anyone wants to harm them**, (literal), **fire proceeds from their mouth and devours** (destroys), **their enemies**, (cp., 2 Kings 1:10). **And** (so), **if anyone wants to harm them** (prior to completing God's will for them),

³ "Jerusalem shall be trodden down," shows the abhorrence of God for the gross, hideous uncleanness, godlessness and blindness of the Gentile, (Newell, *The Book of the Revelation*, pp. 149)

⁴ Two witnesses were required in order to testify against someone, (Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Mat. 18:16) God does not identify who they are anywhere in the Scriptures. Some of the guesses are Enoch and Elijah (because they were taken to heaven without dying and the Jewish tradition believes the two witnesses to be Moses and Elijah, (because they are related to end time prophecy and because they appeared at the Mount of Transfiguration).

⁵ The two witnesses will put on sackcloth as an object lesson to express their great sorrow for the wretched and unbelieving world, racked by God's judgments, overrun by demon hordes, and populated by wicked, sinful people who refuse to repent. They will also mourn because of the desecration of the temple, the oppression of Jerusalem, and the ascendancy of Anti-christ. (MacArthur, *Revelation* 1-11, p. 299)

he must be killed in this manner.⁶

⁶ **These** (two witnesses, also), **have power** (divine authority), **to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days** (the 3 1/2 years), **of their prophecy** (proclaiming the will and mind of God); **and they have power** (divine authority), **over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues** (just like Moses did in Egypt, only these two witness have the power and authority to perform these miracles), **as often as they desire**.

2) The extent, termination and degradation of the two witnesses, (7-10)

INTERPRETATION:

⁷ **When they finish their testimony** (communicating all that it is that God wants to say to the lost and dying human race)⁷, **the beast** (the Roman Prince), **that ascends out of the bottomless pit** (whose source of power is satanic), **will** (being inspired by the devil), **make war against them** (the two witnesses), **overcome them** (gain the victory over them), **and kill them**.

F APPLICATION:

Over and over again, we see that the believer is immortal until his or her work is finished! Man, nor beast, nor the forces of nature, nor any angel, not even the devil himself, can terminate our lives prematurely. The greatest ally of our lives is the will of God concerning us. Nothing can happen to us without God's divine permission! God has a purpose for us all. We must be about our Father's business though, not living in sin that can lead to a premature death. (1 Cor. 11:28-30)

⁸ **And** (after they are killed), **their dead bodies will** (be left to), **lie** (disrespectfully decay), **in the street of the great city** (Jerusalem), **which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt** (because of their gross depravity and idolatry), **where also our Lord was crucified**.

⁹ **Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations** (around the world), **will see their** (televised), **dead**

⁶ The **reason** for the destruction, is certainly to ensure the completion of God's will for these two witnesses as God's spokesmen on the earth during the last 3 1/2 years. The **means** of the destruction, probably has to do with authenticating the message and messenger as truly being God's.

⁷ **Some of what these witnesses will testify will concern:**

1. Jesus Christ, who the Jews have rejected is the Messiah (1 Thess. 2:15, 16), and that salvation can only be found in Him
2. Jesus Christ is the "Lord of the Earth" (Zec. 6:5; cp., Eph. 1:22), and that He is coming to take it back from sinful man, (Rev. 5:2-5; 11:18)
3. The past judgements were from God and that the future ones will be from Him too
4. The beast is full of lies and that all who follow them will perish, (Rev. 13)
5. Jerusalem is like Sodom and Egypt, will suffer severe judgement, but in the end, the nation of Israel will believe in Christ and be saved

bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be (respectfully), **put into graves.**

¹⁰ **And those who dwell on the earth will** (not only see the dead bodies of the two witnesses, but they will also), **rejoice over them, make merry** (express their feelings in a jubilant manner), **and send gifts to one another** (like a kind of satanic Christmas), **because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth,** (by condemning them in their sin, killing those who tried to stop them and working their judgmental miracles).

3) The resurrection, terror, and reward of the two witnesses, (11-13)

INTERPRETATION:

¹¹ **Now** (in the midst of all of this joy and celebration), **after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them** (God resurrected the two witnesses from the dead), **and they stood on their feet** (for all to see that they live again), **and** (the result was that), **great** (mega), **fear fell on those who saw them.**

¹² **And they** (those in fear), **heard a** (audible and), **loud voice from heaven saying to them** (i.e., the two witnesses), **“Come up here.” And they ascended to heaven in a cloud** (just as Christ did), **and their enemies saw them,** (just as the disciples did).

¹³ **In the same hour** (of the resurrection of God's two witnesses), **there was a great earthquake** (just like when Christ arose from the dead), **and** (in this one), **a tenth of the city** (of Jerusalem), **fell.** (Also), **In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest** (those who were not killed), **were afraid** (terrified), **and gave glory**⁸ (credit for the resurrection and earthquake), **to the God of heaven.**⁹

F APPLICATION:

When do we give God credit for what happens in and around us? Is it only when we fear not to? Or are we compelled by our love for Him!?

⁸ "Glory" primarily signifies an opinion, estimate, and hence, the honor resulting from a good opinion. (Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, Logos Library System)

⁹ Some say that the people here that gave God glory, made a profession of salvational faith. I don't believe this is the case for several reasons:

1. "the rest" signifies that all those who did not die in the earthquake made this profession. Nowhere in Scripture is there an example where an entire city made such a profession.
2. they gave glory to the God of heaven not to the God of salvation
3. the word "glory" here means to come to an opinion or to make an estimate of something. In this case, the one who caused the resurrection and earthquake. They give God credit for both and are terrified of Him. The demons did this very thing when Jesus was about to cast them out of someone.
4. there is no mention of any confession and repentance of sin

7. The Parenthetical Commentary Ends and the Seventh Trumpet Sounds, (11:14-19) - "EVER WONDER IF YOU'D RECOGNIZE REAL WORSHIP IS YOU SAW IT?!"

NOTES:

 INTERPRETATION:

¹⁴ **The second woe is past** (and the necessary introductory information concerning the seventh trumpet has been given). **Behold** (with no further delay), **the third woe** (executed by the seventh trumpet), **is coming quickly**, (will be delayed no longer).

¹⁵ **Then the seventh angel** (indeed), **sounded: And** (when he did), **there were loud voices in heaven** (perhaps all the saints and angels in heaven), **saying**, (since the contents of the seventh trumpet concludes at the second coming of Christ), **"The kingdom** (singular not plural), **of this** (earthly, fallen, demonically oppressed), **world has** (finally literally), **become** (again, since the fall in the garden of Eden), **the kingdom of our Lord** (God the Father), **and of His Christ** (God the Son), **and He shall reign forever and ever!**" (as Daniel prophesied in Daniel 2:44)¹⁰

F APPLICATION:

The voices in heaven, and the twenty-four elders, celebrate the great events both in realization and in anticipation: in realization, because, at that seventh angel's sounding, God's whole administrative attitude changes, from hidden, to openly exercised, authority; in anticipation, because the actual subjugation of the enemies is yet to be accomplished.¹¹

¹⁶ **And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces** (again), **and worshiped God**,

¹⁷ **saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord** (Master of all that is created), **God** (Elohim, to whom belongs all power, the), **Almighty** (the omnipotent One), **the One who is** (who never had a beginning), **and who was** (the One who has always been), **and who is to come** (who will always be, [cp., 1:4; 8; 4:8]), **because You have taken** (back the world with), **Your great power and reigned**, (as You said you would).

F APPLICATION:

- We must not incorrectly assume that our Lord is not reigning *today*, because He is. According to Hebrews 7:1–2, Jesus Christ is "King of righteousness" and "King of peace." He is enthroned with the Father (Rev. 3:21), and He will reign until He defeats all His

¹⁰ (Cf. predictions of the earthly kingdom of Christ in Ezek. 21:26-27; Dan. 2:35, 44; 4:3; 6:26; 7:14, 26-27; Zech. 14:9.) The fact that this will be fulfilled at the Second Coming makes it clear that the period of the seventh trumpet chronologically reaches to Christ's return. Therefore the seventh trumpet introduces and includes the seven bowl judgments of the wrath of God revealed in chapter 16. In contrast with previous trumpets where a single voice was heard, here a mighty chorus from heaven joined in the proclamation. Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*. Available: Logos Library System.

¹¹ Newell, *The Book of the Revelation*, p. 161

foes (1 Cor. 15:25). Today, He rules over a spiritual kingdom; but in that future day, He will reign over the nations of the world and rule with a rod of iron.

No matter how difficult the circumstances might be, or how defeated God's people may think they are, Jesus Christ is still King of kings and Lord of lords, and He is in control. One day, we shall triumph!¹²

- The devil offered Christ the kingdom in the desert, but Christ refused the devil's offer. It was not time nor was it through the right means. Jesus waited and now it is time and by the right means. We must be as focused as Christ when the devil tempts us.

¹⁸ **The nations** (of the earth at the sounding of this seventy trumpet), **were angry** (as usual about the proclamation of being ruled by the coming Christ, [cp., Psa. 2]), **and** (as a result of the human races continual rebellion against God's rightful position over them), **Your** (God the Father's ultimate and final), **wrath has come** (to put an end to sinful rebellion once and for all), **and** (thus), **the time of the dead** (has come, in), **that they** (sinners who never asked Christ for forgiveness), **should be judged** (condemned to damnation), **and that** (at the same time), **You should reward Your servants the prophets** (those who have faithfully proclaimed Your Word through the ages), **and the saints** (probably all of the OT and tribulation believers), **and** (notably), **those who fear Your name** (possibly pertaining to faithful, obedient saints), **small and great, and should** (as a result of all of this), **destroy those who destroy the earth**, (by and through sin)."

¹⁹ **Then** (at the conclusion of the unbelievers being judged and condemned, as well as believers rewarded), **the temple of God was opened in heaven** (symbolizing open access of all believers to the visible presence of God), **and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple**, (symbolizing the covenant promises of God that made it possible for believers to be there).¹³ **And** (in grand finale), **there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail**, (testifying to the greatness, power and authority of God).

F APPLICATION:

- "The nations were angry." What do the nations have to be angry about? Certainly the Lord has been good and gracious to them. He has provided their needs (Acts 14:15–17; 17:24–31), assigned their territories, and graciously postponed His judgment to give men opportunity to be saved. Even more, He sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. Today, God offers forgiveness to the nations! What more could He do for them?

¹² Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Logos Library System.

¹³ The Jewish ark may have been destroyed at the same time the temple was destroyed and burned by Nebuchadrezzar (II Kings 25:9; Jer. 3:16).

Then, why are the nations angry? *Because they want to have their own way.* “Why do the heathen [the nations] rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed [Christ], saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder, and cast away Their cords from us’ ” (Ps. 2:1–3). They want to worship and serve the creature instead of the Creator (Rom. 1:25). Like adolescent children, the nations want to cast off all restraint; *and God will permit them to do so.* The result will be another “Babylon” (Rev. 17–18), man’s last attempt to build his Utopia, a “heaven on earth.”¹⁴

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¹⁴ Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Logos Library System.