

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Revelation 11:1-19

Chapter 11 deals with the spiritual life of Israel while *Chapter 12* describes her persecution. Since one needs a place for communication with God, we see that a Temple has been erected.

I. THE “TIMES OF THE GENTILES” TO END IN FORTY-TWO MONTHS.

Verses 1 & 2: *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. ⁽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.*

- A. In this chapter, God is about to take possession of what belongs to Him. The earth is the Lord’s but it has been under Satanic control. One day soon Jesus will personally put the devil into the lake of fire and brimstone, and he will deceive the nations no more.
- B. *Revelation 11* describes the beginning of the last three and one-half (3½) years of the Great Tribulation. During this time the Gentiles will make their last strong attempt to frustrate God’s plan and purpose. The “times of the Gentiles” began with the captivity of Judah under Nebuchadnezzar (*2 Chronicles 36:1-7*). From that day until May 1948, Jerusalem was under Gentile rule. Today the city is still protected by Gentile power. Were it not for America, England, and other free nations, the Muslims of the area would take the new state of Israel. The Arabs next door to Israel hate the Jew as he has never been hated, and were it not for fear of freedom-loving peoples of the earth (and if God would permit it) the Arabs would wipe the Jew from the face of the earth. The “times of the Gentiles” will come to an everlasting end when Jesus comes in power and great glory, and destroys Anti-Christ and his armies.
- C. To John was given a reed like unto a rod, and the Angel said, as already noted in *Verses 1 & 2:* “*Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple, leave out, and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles. And 42 months or three and one-half (3½) years shall the Holy City be tread underfoot.*”
- D. Now we find that a third temple has been erected. It is probably not the final millennial Temple of *Ezekiel 40* through *48*, but one which is built during the Tribulation hour and used sacrilegiously by the beast who claims to be God (see *2 Thessalonians 2:4*). This temple, its altar, and the attendants are Jewish. There is no outer court for Gentiles as there was in past temples.

Notice that this temple has nothing to do with the Church which is already in heaven (*Revelation 4:1*). It is for Jews and Gentiles, not Jews, Gentiles, and the church of God. In the second temple, rebuilt and enlarged by Herod the Great in 20 or 21 B.C., the outer court was marked off from the inner one where only Israel was permitted to enter. The courts were separated by ...*the middle wall of partition (Ephesians 2:14)*, and no Gentile was allowed beyond that point. When the Apostle Paul broke this rule, angry Jews almost killed him. *Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place (Acts 21:28).*

1. The measuring reed, like unto a rod, is most likely from the brakes of the Jordan Valley and is probably about ten feet in length. Through the angel, John is told to measure the temple of God and the altar, as well as the people of Israel (*concerning their spirituality*). The first place of worship ever built was called Solomon's Temple and is discussed in *1 Chronicles, Chapters 22, 28, and 29*, and *2 Chronicles, Chapters 2 through 7*.
 2. This temple was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in approximately 590 B.C. Seventy years later it was rebuilt under Zerubbabel and Joshua. This second temple was desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes, a Greco-Syrian ruler. He stuck a pig in the temple—an act which prefigured the final desecration to occur under Antichrist as he sets up *the abomination of desolation* in the Tribulation temple (*Matthew 24:15*).
- E. John was given a measuring stick and it was ten feet long. The temple, the altar, and the worshippers were included in the measurements. This suggests that God will preserve and protect the temple, the *altar*, and those who worship there.
- F. John had been only a spectator until now, but with Israel, his own brethren, in the picture, he becomes the main actor. The Angel instructed him to rise and measure. He is roused into speedy activity by the divine command, and he measures the temple, the altar, and the worshippers as he was instructed to do.

Let me interject here a few observations:

So as we have noted John measures the Tribulation temple, he is told to omit the outer court, undoubtedly because Gentiles will trample the Holy City (Jerusalem) under their feet for forty-two months.

There is no doubt about the literalness of this seven-year period. Daniel's first sixty-nine weeks (see *Daniel 9:24-26*) totaled 483 years. We recall from our discussion in *Chapter 6* that the term *week* is *heptad* in the original Hebrew, and means "seven years." Thus, sixty-nine multiplied by seven equals 483 years to the day. If this be so, why wouldn't Daniel's final, or seventieth, week also consist of seven years—or 2,520 days—as well? The formula is so clear that a child can grasp it. One half of 2,520 is 1,260 days—or forty-two months of thirty days each—or three and one-half years. Conversely, two times three and one-half years equals seven years—or eighty-four months of thirty days each—or 2,520 days.

Don't forget to take into account that the old Jewish calendar contained twelve months of thirty days each, not the 365 days of modern calendars. Is a seven-year plan scriptural then? We can check for ourselves because the days are mentioned in *Revelation 11:3 & Revelation 12:6* as 1,260. Likewise, the months are mentioned in *Revelation 11:2* and *Revelation 13:5*, as forty-two. Again we can easily see that 1,260 days multiplied by two equals 2,520 days, and that forty-two multiplied by two equals eighty-four months—one *heptad*, or seven years. One does not have to be a mathematical wizard or a calculus genius to discover that the Tribulation is a full seven years in duration. Take it literally!

During the final half of the seven years, two witnesses appear.



II. GOD'S TWO WITNESSES

Revelation 11:3-12

Verses 3-4 ⁽³⁾And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. ⁽⁴⁾These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

- A. We are dealing with Jews in this passage, and Jewish law demanded two witnesses to give competent evidence concerning matters of law or religion. Therefore, we have the two angels at the tomb—two at the ascension—the seventy sent out two by two. These two witnesses are God's prophets, sent to proclaim His message of doom. They are clothed in sackcloth. In the Bible, sackcloth and ashes always picture repentance—and repentance is demanded when sin stalks a nation. Repentance is God's call to either turn or burn. So God sends two witnesses—and they prophesy exactly 1260 days—no more, no less.
1. Olive trees exude oil. Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Candlesticks are light bearers. Thus, we have a beautiful picture of two chosen witnesses, anointed by the power of the Holy Spirit, proclaiming the message of light in the midst of a sin-blackened world. There is no other way to do God's service. Oh! *Be*

- B. There has been a great deal of discussion concerning the identity of these two witnesses. Most Bible scholars believe they are either Elijah and Moses, or Elijah and Enoch.
1. Malachi is explicit in predicting Elijah's future appearance upon earth. He states: *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord (Malachi 3:1 and 4:5).* Thus, there is no doubt about Elijah being one of the witnesses.
 2. This prediction is corroborated by the fact that Elijah did not die a physical death but was taken up into heaven by a whirlwind and a chariot of fire note: *(2 Kings 2:9-11).* ⁽⁹⁾*And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.* ⁽¹⁰⁾*And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.* ⁽¹¹⁾*And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*
 3. Likewise, Enoch was taken to heaven without experiencing death note: ⁽²⁴⁾*And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. Genesis 5:24 (KJV)*
⁽⁵⁾*By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. Hebrews 11:5 (KJV)*
 4. He also prophesied the coming day of God's judgment and the return of Christ with His church (see **Jude 14,15**). Since Enoch's earthly ministry predated the establishment of the Jewish race, he is considered by some as God's first prophet to the Gentiles. Elijah, on the other hand, was God's prophet to Israel. Thus, since God's witness during the Tribulation hour is to both groups, many believe the two witnesses to be Elijah and Enoch.
 5. **Personally, I believe** that Moses will be the other witness because he appeared with Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration (see **Matthew 17:1-8**)—a preview of the glory to come in that day when the Lord Jesus Christ will be the only important one. The preview indicates that, when the day finally arrives, Moses and Elijah (also called Elias)—representatives of the law and of the prophets—will be present, undoubtedly as the two witnesses.
 6. Concerning Moses: *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken...and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in*

*my name, I will require it of him (Deuteronomy 18:15,18-19). One should also keep in mind that the body of Moses was preserved by God, **Jude 9** declares: *Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.**

- C. These witnesses, dressed in sackcloth and proclaiming the message of judgment, will be hated. Latter-day terrorists will attempt to destroy them. God, however, forbids it and offers sovereign protection.

Verse 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.*

1. This can be nothing but supernatural power and intervention.
2. The fact that the two witnesses have superhuman anointing is evident from the next verse.

Verse 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.*

- D. One of these two witnesses, Elijah (or Elias), performed this very miracle in earlier days: *Elias ...prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit (James 5:17,18).*
- E. Moses, the second witness, had power (along with Aaron his brother) to turn the waters into blood and smite the earth with diversified plagues (see **Exodus 7-10**). Thus, the Tribulation ministry of these two supernaturally anointed prophets will be but a repeat performance. During the entire period of their witness they cannot be killed. Their death must be at God's appointed time.

Verse 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.*

1. Isn't it wonderful to know that nothing can happen to any child of God without the Lord's divine permission? "What have I to dread, what have I to fear? / Leaning on the everlasting arms? / I have blessed peace, with my Lord so near; leaning on the everlasting arms."
2. That's right, no one can take a believer's life without the permissive will of God: *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? (Job 7:1). It is appointed unto men once to die (Hebrews 9:27).* This is why Christians should always say, *If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that (James 4:15).*
3. At this point the time of the witnesses' testifying ends. God's purpose for His two servants has been completed. Soon they will be called home. The method of their release from the body is death at the hands of the beast. His conduct is identical to that of the now deceased Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, who had the bodies of America's brave servicemen displayed in the streets of Tehran

following the April 1980 hostage rescue attempt. His action was one of the most repulsive, repugnant sights ever witnessed. The Antichrist commits the same dastardly deed with the bodies of Moses and Elijah.

Verse 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.*

- F. Since the Lord was crucified in this city, we know it to be Jerusalem.
1. The term *great city* is the Holy City (**Jerusalem**) of **Verse 2**. Why, then, is it called Sodom and Egypt?
 - a. Because the moral and spiritual conditions that existed in Sodom before its destruction, and the idolatrous iniquities that abounded in Egypt before God judged the land, are found inundating Jerusalem during this period of time.
 - b. All the preaching of repentance by the two witnesses in sackcloth does not change the wicked complexion of the city.

The death of the two witnesses is observed by the entire world, as evidenced by the next verse.

Verse 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.*

- G. Satellite television, beaming the identical image to every nation on earth, and into every home equipped with a receiver, allows the spectacle to be observed internationally. When I first began this study back in my days in college we would come to this verse and scratch our heads. I was a literalist, I believed God could show it to all people, perhaps in their minds eye. When the Gulf War broke out in 1991, as I sat in my restaurant in Fayetteville and watched the events unfold on the battlefield in real-time it struck me that we are now living in the latter days!!!
1. The action is a victory celebration by the Antichrist, similar to today's televised productions of Osama Bin Laden, where he tries to show people being defeated every day; he attempts to use the television to demoralize our nation and the war on terror. I'm afraid that it's working now and it will work when these two witnesses are displayed to the world as being defeated. Celebrations will break out all around the world.
 2. In response, the world rejoices. The two "gloom and doom" preachers are gone! No longer will two hellfire advocates spoil their riotous parties. No longer will their beer and salami festivals be hindered. The two witnesses are dead.

Verse 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.*

- H. Wait! The party is coming to an end!
1. Their food will soon stick in their throats.
 2. A miracle of spectacular proportion is about to occur!

Verses 11-12: ⁽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. ⁽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.

- I. From the abyss there will come a mysterious beast to whom Satan will give power and authority as his chosen agent for Prime Minister!

1. The beast will blaspheme God and all that is holy.
2. He will have power to perform miracles that will cause the mass of people to accept him as the Messiah.



- J. The times will be so bad that finally the two witnesses will be overcome and killed!
1. The people will rejoice and send one another gifts.
 2. After 3½ years of witness they are slain.
 3. What form of death they will suffer we are not told, although during the reign of the Antichrist, beheading is prevalent. (**Revelation 20:4**)
 4. We are told they will not be buried. Their dead bodies will be left lying in the streets of Jerusalem.
 5. Their enemies were not satisfied to kill them—they actually gloated over their

decaying bodies for eighty-four long hours.

6. The two witnesses are dead. Parties are in progress. Gifts are being exchanged. The whole country is jubilant.
- K. The Scene Changes: “*And after 3½ days the spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.*”
1. The party came to an abrupt end.
 2. In **Verse 12** we see that God then took them up to heaven. The mob stood horrified. They did their work God brought them back home again.

Let’s summarize what has just happened.

Elijah and Moses receive the same treatment as the raptured saints in **Revelation 4:1**. Hallelujah! They depart for glory in a twinkling of an eye. As this awe-inspiring sight is being observed, God sends judgment for all the sacrilegious acts the violent, drug-crazed crowds perpetrated on these two servants.

III. THE SECOND WOE—*Revelation 11:13-14*

Verses 13-14: 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.* ¹⁴*The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.*

- A. Talk about a television spectacular! As the two witness begin their ascension, the earth begins to tremble, groan, and go into a mighty earthquake.
1. One-tenth of Jerusalem is leveled.
 2. Two men come to life again and then vanish in a cloud!
 3. Next an unprecedented earthquake hits the city and 7,000 celebrities (the interpretation of many scholars)— yes, big names among the elite—are killed.
 4. This video extravaganza will make the nightly news, along with all the cable news networks and their shock and awe, seem like child’s play.
 5. Those who live through the experience become exceedingly frightened and begin to praise God.
 - a. It is not from converted hearts that they exalt Him.
 - b. Instead, their praise is the result of astonishment and alarm.
 - c. Their reaction is similar to that of the scribes and the Pharisees who witnessed the miracle of the healed paralytic and were all amazed, and glorified God, and were filled with fear (see **Luke 5:26**).
 - d. They did not get saved, just scared!
 - e. Some people develop a spiritual vocabulary in a hurry. Wait until atomic bombs begin flying. Prayer and praise will become the order of

the day!

6. Remember the angel in **Revelation 8:13** who cried, “Woe, woe, woe?” Each woe depicted a different judgment. Each, in turn, became more severe.
 - a. The first woe was the fifth trumpet blast,
 - b. The second woe the sixth trumpet blast.
 - c. At this point the final woe has come and now the seventh trumpet, is about to sound.

IV. THE SEVENTH TRUMPETS *Revelation 11:15-19*

Verse 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.*

- A. The picture before us is the same as the one in **Revelation 19:11-16**—the return of the King. If one remembers that **Revelation 6S11** and **Revelation 12-19:15** run concurrently, or side by side, during the Tribulation hour, he will understand why the King returns both in **Revelation 11:15** and in **Revelation 19:16**. **Revelation 12 S19:15** are but a repeat of the events described in **Revelation 6S11**.
- B. When the seventh angel sounds, there will be no little stir in Heaven. As the King returns, a praise and worship service begins. As we see in **Verse 16**.

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

1. This is an act of gratitude. Remember that the twenty-four elders represent all believers—Old and New Testament—who have lived on this earth and who have been raptured to heaven in **Revelation 4:1**.
 - a. They know firsthand that Satan has been the God of this world system (Note: **2 Corinthians 4:4** *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*).
 - b. They understand fully that the nations of this world have been under his control (One may see in **Matthew 4:8-9** how the great deceiver, the Devil went after our Lord with a vengeance to tempt Him in every way possible ...¹⁸⁾*Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;* ¹⁹⁾*And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.*) and if the Devil went after our Lord then know that he will come after each of us. But now, praise God, Satan’s reign has finally ended—the King has come!

- c. There is great rejoicing in heaven among the raptured saints as the midnight newscast is shared. They unitedly pray...

Verse 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.*

- C. Their prayer is to Christ, the One who used the title, *which art, and wast, and art to come*.
 - 1. The power that was always His has now been embraced, and He has begun His reign.
 - 2. The wicked are upset over the King's return.

Verse 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.*

- D. Notice the number of happenings which transpire at the King's return.
 - 1. First, the nations are angry. This is also observed in the other text describing the King's descent to earth: *And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army (Revelation 19:19).*
 - 2. Second, the day of God's wrath has come as the King returns. This is the period of time when *out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God (Revelation 19:15).*
 - 3. Third, at the conclusion of the King's 1,000-year reign, the wicked are judged. The setting is **Revelation 20:11-15**.
 - 4. Fourth, the faithful prophets and saints, small and great, are rewarded at the end of the 1,000 years.
 - a. This is not a picture of the Judgment Seat of Christ (**Note:** ¹⁰*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 2 Corinthians 5:10*)
 - b. Then believers were:
 - (1) Raptured (**Revelation 4:1**),
 - (2) Investigated (**Revelation 4:2**),
 - (3) Coronated (**Revelation 4:4**), and
 - (4) Exalted as they laid their crowns at Jesus' feet (**Revelation 4:10**), long before the Tribulation hour ended.

- c. The rewards presented at this time are for those who were faithful during the kingdom age—those who did not rebel and follow Satan at its conclusion (*Revelation 20:7S8*).
- 5. Fifth, those who destroyed the earth are destroyed.
 - a. This refers to spirit beings who followed the destroyer, Satan. Their destruction is separate from that of the nations, hence the division between the two in *Verse 18*.
 - b. Satanic beings receive their judgment at this hour as well as the earth dwellers. In the midst of all of this, Israel is spared.

Verse 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.

- E. The temple of God and the Ark of the Testament, both connected with Jewish worship, picture Israel.
 - 1. Thus, in the midst of *lightnings, and voices and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail,*
 - 2. God spares His covenant people. Praise Jehovah our God!

Now on to Chapter 12, The Seven Personages