

1. **Introduction:** As we have seen, the “Temple of God” is no longer a physical structure made by human hands. Now, God’s Holy Spirit dwells in believers, making manifest God’s presence.
 - Believers don’t merely form an institutional church, they are a living, spiritual extension of Jesus with Christ as the “Head,” believers are interconnected “members” of His mystical body, unified by the Holy Spirit. Since Christ’s resurrection, believers, as the church, are the only temple in which God dwells.
2. **Ephesians 2:19-22:** *So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.*
 - In 11:1-2, John is told to “measure” the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there, but to not measure the outer court which is given over to the nations to trample for 42 months.
 - The instruction to measure the temple appears to be unrelated to either the Jerusalem Temple or the heavenly temple/throne room of chapters 4 and 5. From early in the Christian movement, followers of Jesus recognized they are the true temple (i.e., current dwelling of God through His Spirit).
 - It seems these references to the temple, altar, worshippers, outer court, and the holy city in 11:1-2 all refer figuratively or symbolically to the church (that is to believers). Recall that in Rev. 3:12 the church (believers) are promised they will be “*a pillar in the temple*” of God, “*the New Jerusalem*”!
3. **Revelation 3:12:** *The one who conquers, I (Jesus) will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.*
4. **Revelation 11:1-2:** *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, ² but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.*
5. **Measuring:** What does “measuring” symbolize? “Measuring” is equivalent to “sealing” in chapter 7. Those who worship in 11:1 are the same as the “144,000” in 7:4.
 - “*To measure*” in 11:1, is not to determine width, height, or other physical properties of the temple. “To measure” implies God’s spiritual protection, but not protection from physical persecution or death. OT examples of “measuring” that “imply protection” are found in 2 Sam 8:2b; Isa. 28:16-17; Jer. 31:38-40; Ezek. 40:1-6; 42:20; Zech. 1:16.

- The point of this imagery is to remind us that “in Christ” we are spiritually sustained, protected, and kept secure in faith even if we suffer greatly at the hands of the Beast. To be “measured” means being known in detail, loved and preserved by God against all opposition. (known, like “taking the measure” of a person.)
 - Measuring the inner sanctuary seems to refer to God’s spiritual protection of the church, while the outer court not being measured means the church community is left physically vulnerable to outsiders. Pagan nations will trample it for 42 months.
 - Ezekiel’s measuring of his visionary temple marked out the place where God would come to dwell. In the same way, John’s measuring the human temple (the community of God’s people) signifies it is acceptable as God’s dwelling, where He will honor and bless them with His presence.
6. **Two Witnesses**: Under the Law, to prove an assertion, 2 witnesses who agree are required, so the two witnesses seem to symbolize witnessing that is accepted as authoritative under the Law.
7. **Revelation 11:3-6**: *And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.”⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.⁵ And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed.⁶ They have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may 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 kind of plague, as often as they desire.*
- In 10:11, John, after eating the little scroll, was told, “*You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings.*” These witnesses are to follow John’s footsteps in “prophesying.” They are to prophesy for 1260 days clothed in sackcloth (that expresses humility or mourning).
8. **Two Witnesses**: Identifying the witnesses typically means choosing one of two categories: (1.) The witnesses are actual individuals, either historical figures or current people. (2.) The witnesses symbolize the entire church witnessing to Christ and His gospel in a missionary and prophetic role during this present age and at the close of history.
9. **1260 Days; 42 Months; 3 1/2 Years; A Time, Times, and Half a Time (11:2-3)**: Dispensationalists say the references are to a time interval of 3 ½ years during the future 7-year Great Tribulation.
- Another accepted view is that the reference is to symbolic time (i.e., more the quality of a time duration than its quantity). That view assumes the 4 time-interval references are literary variations of the same time interval and refer to the present age intervening between the two comings (advents) of Christ.
 - The prophetic vision thus does not reveal exactly how long the Beast will dominate, but denotes kind of time being symbolized, time characterized by spiritual and theological quality.

- John never uses the phrase 3 ½ years. He uses 1260 days in a positive sense for times of protection and perseveration. For example, when the two witnesses are protected while they prophesy. When the church is being mistreated and persecuted, the same duration of time is referred to as “42 months.”
 - Thus, we see the holy city trampled for 42 months. In chapter 13, the beast exercises authority and persecutes the church for 42 months.
10. **Two Possible Historical Persons:** Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:10-11). Neither experienced physical death. Theologically, they are candidates to be restored to earth to complete their ministries.
11. **Another Possibility:** The individuals are simply men of their times but patterned after Moses and Elijah, the two who appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt. 17:3).
- Whatever the case, the witnesses are given dramatic powers (11:5-6) that belong to them jointly. The power attributed to the witnesses (they and them) is not divided between the two but held jointly.
 - This undivided power seems to point to an empowered group (like the church) witnessing.
12. **Two Witnesses as “Two Olive Trees and Two Lampstands:”** (11:4). Olive trees likely refer to the witnesses being empowered by the Holy Spirit (also, olive oil used to anoint for ministry of Holy Spirit).
- “Lampstands” in Revelation symbolize the church exercising its role as witness to Christ and His gospel (the church is to be a light glowing with truth in the darkness of a sinful world).
 - “Two” lampstands signify meeting the requirement for “two witnesses who agree” to assure their evidence is to be accepted as true. The two witnesses are not merely two individuals but a symbol of the whole church insofar as, in the power of the Holy Spirit, it fulfills its role as faithful prophetic witness.
 - The two Revelation witnesses represent all believers who faithfully bear witness to Christ and His gospel.
 - The time for faithful witnessing (symbolized by 42 months) is the interval between Jesus’ resurrection and second coming. Those who witness will be protected spiritually but not physically. (Take up your cross!)
 - The two witnesses, by the power of the Holy Spirit, have the power to devour those wishing to harm them by the fire of powerfully effective spoken words. They also have the power (not necessarily exercised) to stop the rain, to turn water into blood, and to strike the earth with plagues (11:3-6). After completing their testimony, the beast from the bottomless pit conquers and kills them.
13. **Revelation 11:7-8:** *And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them,⁸ and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified.*

- Once the witnesses finished their testimony (i.e., completed the work assigned by God), they were killed by the beast that rises from the bottomless pit. Their corpses lay in the street of the great city for all to see. The great city is the center of opposition to God (Babylon in its time; Rome in the first century).
- The great city is figuratively called Sodom (a place of moral depravity), or Egypt (a place of oppression and slavery), or Jerusalem (a place responsible for the unjust death of Jesus).

14. **Revelation 11:9-11:** *For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, ¹⁰ and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.*

- The way of the fallen world is that whenever the gospel is preached, opposition follows. In this case, the witnesses are killed, their corpses left in the open without burial. Unbelievers celebrate their demise.
- But after 3 ½ days God restores life and they stand on their feet. That naturally resulted in a great fear among those who witnessed their return to life.

15. **Revelation 11:12-16:** *Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here!” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. ¹³ And at 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.*

- The witnesses killed by the beast are resurrected and ascend to heaven in a cloud while their enemies watch. At that time, there was a great earthquake felling a tenth of the city and killing 7,000 people. The people who survived were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.
- Does the fact the people “give glory to God” indicate the genuine repentance and conversion of nine tenths of the people, or does it indicate a forced acknowledgment of God’s sovereignty and glory by His defeated enemies?
- Resurrection is God’s reversal of the curse of death. It defeats evil’s last and greatest weapon. The resurrection referred to here could be the witnesses’ resurrection at the end of the age or it could be symbolic of the witnesses’ vindication by God.

16. **Revelation 11:14:** *The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.*

- The eagle in 8:13 announced the coming of 3 “woes”. The first and second are now past. John does not formally indicate the beginning of the third woe. The immediate connection to the seventh trumpet in 11:15-19 seems to make the most sense.

17. **Next:** The Seventh Trumpet (11:15-19).