

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

A Verse by Verse Study

by

Oliver B. Greene

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

The “Times of the Gentiles”; The Two Witnesses; The Seventh Trumpet Revelation 11:1-2:

1. **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.**

In this chapter, God is about to take possession of what belongs to Him. The earth is the Lord's, it was created by Him and for Him - but it has been under Satanic control for six thousand years. God gave Adam dominion over all creation and made him dictator of the universe - but! he sold out to the devil. God gave Adam a command which he deliberately disobeyed, thereby losing everything God had entrusted to him. One of these glorious days the second Adam (Christ) will redeem all that the first Adam lost, including the earth and all creation.

Today the devil is the prince of the power of the air . . . the god of this age (Ephesians 2:1-3, II Corinthians 4:3,4). One day soon Jesus will personally put the devil into the lake of fire and brimstone, and he will deceive the nations no more. In that day, **“the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea”** (Isaiah 11:9).

Revelation 11 describes the beginning of the last three and one-half 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 (II Chronicles 36:1-7). From that day until May 1948, Jerusalem was under Gentile rule. Today the city is still protected because of Gentile power.

Were it not for America, England, and other free nations, the Communists 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 the freedom-loving peoples of 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 Antichrist and his armies. The account is found in Revelation 19:11-21.

In the last verse in chapter ten, John was informed that he must prophesy again of many peoples, tongues, and nations. As we look into this a bit further, we learn that John begins that ministry in our present chapter.

To prophesy is not merely to foretell events of the future it is also to exercise the functions of a witness for God. All true Bible preachers are prophets in a sense.

To declare the message and the will of God, to act as God's ambassador and mouthpiece, is to fulfill the office of a prophet. Aaron was Moses' prophet; he was spokesman for Moses because Moses had an impediment of speech. God has always had such witnesses here on earth and He always will have. Every true Christian who witnesses against wickedness, lifts up righteousness, points men and women to the Lamb of God - is a prophet, and after the Rapture of the Church will sit with Jesus as He judges unrighteousness.

“Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?” (I Corinthians 6:2). Saints have never before judged the world, but they will judge with Jesus, our High Priest and Righteous Judge:

“Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword In then hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: THIS HONOUR HAVE ALL HIS SAINTS . . .” (Psalm 149:5-9). Read those verses in your Bible - and see the great honor God has placed upon His children, the true believers.

Revelation 11:1 begins with a conjunction: “. . . **and**” thus connecting this verse with the last verse in chapter ten. John is here beginning the prophecy mentioned in the preceding verse.

To John was given a reed like unto a rod, and the Angel said, **“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 the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.”** (Forty-two months add up to three and one-half years . . . the last half of Daniel's seventieth week . . . the part of the Tribulation period known as the GREAT Tribulation.)

These words set forth the initial progress of the actual taking possession of the earth by our victorious Redeemer - the Lord Jesus. Like judgment administrations as a whole, this taking possession of earth is a gradual work which passes through different stages, involving particular times, places, and persons. This is the beginning of the taking-over of all things by the rightful Heir to all things - the Lord Jesus Christ.

John was given a reed **“like unto a rod.”** (We would call it a measuring stick.) It was an instrument used in taking measurements, and it was ten feet long. (Read Ezekiel 40:3 and Zechariah 1:16.) 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.

Revelation 21:15 tells of an angel with a golden reed measuring the glorified Church - or the Pearly white City. Israel is an earthly people with earthly promises. They have to do with earthly blessings throughout all eternity.

But the Church (the Bride) is a heavenly people with heavenly promises, and will be on display in the heavenlies, showing forth the exceeding riches of God's grace (Ephesians 2:6).

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.

When the Jews asked Pilate to release Barabbas and crucify Jesus, they asked that His Blood be upon them and upon their children. God set Israel aside for a season.

He did not cast them away, but gave them up to blindness until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. Jewish worship ceased, the Christian era began - and will continue until the Rapture, when the Church will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. When true worship is set up again, it will be Jewish worship after the manner of Israel.

Believers have no specific place of worship - but the Jew could not worship without the temple. Christians have no temple on earth (I Corinthians 6:19; II Corinthians 6:16). "**God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth**" (John 4:21-24; Hebrews 10:19-22).

The sanctuary above is the only place of worship for true believers. Christian sacrifices are praises to God (Hebrews 13:15, 16).

This is quite different from Jewish worship, both in the past and that which is to come. Both the temple and the altar are essential and imperative to Jewish worship. That is the reason the Jews became so angry when Jesus said, "**Destroy this temple and I will raise it up in three days.**" He was speaking of His body, but they thought he spoke of the beautiful temple in Jerusalem.

The temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem by the Jews after the Rapture of the Church. The temple has been rebuilt many times, but it will be rebuilt when the Jews construct it after the Rapture. It will be built where the Mosque of Omar now stands.

Below is a list of some of the temples that have been destroyed:

1. Solomon's Temple (I Kings, chapter 7). This temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 588 B. C.
2. Zerubbabel's Temple (Ezra 3:12), pillaged and dedicated to the heathen god, Jupiter, by Antiochus Epiphanes, 170 B. C.
3. Herod's Temple (John 2:20) was very beautiful. Its building was begun in 17 B. C., and it was destroyed by Titus in 70 A. D.

Two future temples:

1. The temple to be rebuilt during the first three and one-half years of the reign of the Antichrist (I Thessalonians 2:4). Judah will then be back in her own land and will rebuild this temple.
2. The Millennial Temple - the temple of Jesus (Acts 15:16). Read Ezekiel 40, and you will find the description of its magnificence.

In I Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19, the body made up of born again, blood-washed believers is called **“the temple of God.”** Jerusalem is the only city on earth where the temple of stone is divinely sanctioned and honored by the Lord.

In Revelation 11:2 we learn that the Holy City shall be trodden under foot for forty and two months - the last half of the seven years of Tribulation. Jerusalem is the Holy City spoken of throughout the Bible. Read Nehemiah 11:1-18; Isaiah 52:1 and Daniel 9:24. This period is mentioned in Revelation 11:3 and 12:6 as **“1,260 days.”** In Revelation 12:14 and Daniel 9:27, it is spoken of as **“time, times, and half-time.”** The statements all refer to the three and one-half years which comprise the last half of the Tribulation period. Bible months having to do with prophecy are always months of thirty days each. There are no twenty-eight-day nor thirty-one-day months in Bible prophecy. For 1,260 days, the Gentiles will tread down the people in Jerusalem as mire in the streets (Isaiah 10:6).

The anti-Christian nations will befriend the Jew during the first half of the reign of the Antichrist - the time of peace when he rides out with a bow but no arrow. However, these same people will turn and in vengeance and horrible terror the Jews **“shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains and the beasts of the earth. The fowls shall summer upon them and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them”** (Isaiah 18:6).

Thus the Gentile enemies will turn loose their fury upon Judah . . . Israel, God’s chosen people.

GOD’S TWO WITNESSES

Revelation 11:3-12:

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.**
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.**
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.**
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.**
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.**

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.**

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.**

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.**

We are dealing with Jews in this passage, and Jewish law demanded two witnesses to give competent evidence concerning matters of law, religion, or the dealings of men with one another (Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15). (You will recall that two angels were in the tomb of Jesus the morning of His resurrection - John 20:12. Two men appeared to the disciples at the Lord's ascension - Acts 1:10. In Luke 10:1 the seventy were sent out two by two.) So God sends TWO witnesses - and they prophesy exactly 1,260 days - no more, no less.

Who are these two witnesses? Bible scholars differ as to their identity. Some say they are Elijah and Enoch, basing their decision on Hebrews 9:27: “. . . **It is appointed unto men once to die.**” This leads them to conclude that since Enoch and Elijah were the only two men to leave this world without dying, they must be the two witnesses. But may I remind you that at the Rapture of the Church a great number will ascend to Heaven without dying: I Thessalonians 4:16b-17: “. . . **and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air . . .**” The statement in Hebrews cannot mean every individual - but man as a race.

Personally, I believe Enoch is a type of the New Testament Church when raptured. Enoch lived in the darkest hour just before the judgment of God fell by way of the flood. He walked with God - and one day in that dark hour he went home to be with God - without dying.

The Church is living in the darkest hour of man's history . . . and it will be even darker before we are caught up to meet Jesus in the clouds. Just as Enoch was caught up from this earth into God's presence, so shall the Church be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (I Thessalonians 4:13-17; I Corinthians 15:50-55).

Others believe the witnesses will be Elijah and Moses. Moses had much to do with Israel. He was the one to whom God gave the Law: “**The law came by Moses.**” He is the only man for whom God ever came down in order to personally supervise his funeral (Deuteronomy 34:6).

I believe that the evidence in harmony with the remainder of Revelation proves that not Enoch, but Moses, was the other witness. There is no question that Elijah was one of these two witnesses. The Old Testament - and also the Lord Jesus Himself - tells us plainly that Elijah will come again before the coming of Jesus in power and great glory. Revelation 11:5 also identifies this prophet of fire. “**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.**”

Verse 6 also identifies Elijah: **“These have power to shut up 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 miracles described in the first part of this verse are certainly characteristic of Elijah, the chief of prophets, who called fire down from Heaven and shut up the heavens so that it rained not for the space of three and one-half years during the reign of wicked Ahab. Elijah appeared to Israel during the darkest day of their spiritual bondage here on earth. The nation departed from the Lord under the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, and God sent Elijah, the mighty prophet of fire, to deliver Israel from spiritual bondage after the same fashion Moses delivered them from physical bondage.

The miracles recorded in the last part of the verse fit Moses in every detail. Read the account in Exodus, when God sent Moses to deliver His people from the hand of Pharaoh - and Pharaoh was certainly a type of the Antichrist.

When Moses went down to meet Pharaoh, he turned the water to blood and called down ten plagues upon the Egyptians. Read and study Exodus, chapters five through twelve. When it seemed that Israel would be crushed and destroyed by the iron hand of Pharaoh, it was Moses who came from the back side of the desert - called and commissioned by God - to deliver Israel out of Egyptian bondage. These chapters in Exodus tell the story of plague after plague being visited upon the godless nation of Egypt. God finally destroyed them at the bottom of the Red Sea. Under the hand of God, Moses delivered Israel from material and physical bondage. He led them on their way to Canaan's land. Why should not God use this great deliverer again as one of the witnesses of Revelation 11?

Moses appeared to Israel in one of the darkest moments in history; why not again in this dark moment when it seems that Antichrist and the wicked Gentiles will completely annihilate the little band of Israelites? (The Jew can never be destroyed; he is the apple of God's eye, and God will protect him. Many have tried to destroy Israel - and have failed. History records such instances even in your day and mine - Hitler was one of the last, and Adolph Eichman paid with his life for his part in attempting to wipe the Jew from the face of the earth.)

Moses and Elijah were the outstanding mountain-peak prophets in God's program in dealing with Israel throughout the Old Testament era. And when Jesus went up on the Mount of Transfiguration it was Moses and Elijah (not Enoch and Elijah) who came down to meet Him and discuss His coming death on the Cross (Luke 9:27 -35).

Jesus came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill the Law and the prophets (Matthew 5:17). Since God gave the Law to Moses, and since Elijah was the chief of prophets, it seems reasonable that it would be these two with whom Jesus would discuss **“. . . His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.”**

To the nation Israel, these two prophets of God represent spiritual and physical deliverance. There are three things about these two witnesses that cause me to believe they will be Moses and Elijah:

1. Their times
2. What they did
3. Their end

Their times were not Gospel times. They were called to prophecy in times of horror. The Jew will be back in his own land, his temple will have been rebuilt; but there is no trace of Gospel or of the grace of God at that moment. Believers under grace are not to render evil for evil; we are to return good for evil. We are to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us. We are to rejoice and be exceeding glad when we are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Jesus had power to call down fire and destroy His enemies - but He did not.

He said He came to save . . . not to destroy (Luke 9:56). He told Peter to put up his sword, and informed him that He could call down twelve legions of angels if He needed help.

But it will be quite different when Moses and Elijah prophesy.

These two witnesses will have the power to destroy men - and they WILL destroy men with fire which **“issueth out of their mouth.”** Imagine Moses and Elijah prophesying on a street corner in Jerusalem. Henchmen of the Antichrist walk up and begin to mock. Elijah simply blows his breath on them - and they turn to a handful of ashes!

Oh, yes - the Word of God is true. It makes no difference what modernists and liberals say about it, these prophets will blow their breath upon men and cremate them! The preaching of the Gospel is good news (Isaiah 52:7), but the message of the two witnesses will be a message of literal fire.

These prophets are clothed in sackcloth, a symbol of calamity and judgment. Nature rejoices at the message of grace (Isaiah 55:12,13), but the message of these two mighty men will shut up Heaven and no rain will fall for three-and-a-half years. They will speak - and rivers will turn to blood. Plagues of sores and diseases . . . things too terrible to name . . . come upon men because of them. They remind us of the time when Jeroboam's hand was withered by the unnamed man of God (I Kings 13:4) and of the time when fire from Heaven consumed the soldiers of Ahaziah who came to Elijah on the hill (II Kings 1). The times of these two witnesses will be times of exceeding evil and of fiery judgment.

- Jacob wore sackcloth when he mourned for his sons.
- David wore sackcloth when he grieved deeply because Abner was unjustly killed.
- Daniel wore sackcloth when he came before the Lord to weep and pray about the sins of Israel.
- Hezekiah wore sackcloth when he heard of the terrible blasphemies of Sennacherib.
- The priest of God wore sackcloth when the holy services of the temple were interrupted.

In like manner, the two witnesses will wear sackcloth, and during the time they prophesy, hell will have literally moved to this earth. From the abyss there will come a mysterious beast to whom Satan will give power and authority as his chosen agent for prime minister. The beast will blaspheme God and the temple and all that is holy.

He will have power to perform miracles that will cause the mass of earth's dwellers to accept him as Messiah. The times will become so terrible, the war against God and against righteousness will become so fierce, that the fire-producing witnesses themselves will finally be overcome and killed by the powerful counterfeit messiah. Peoples of earth will be so wicked and vile that they will send gifts to each other and rejoice with dancing in the streets because God's witnesses have been slain! It will be a time of jubilee among the enemies of God!

The time of the two witnesses will be a time of supernaturalism - both from Heaven and from the underworld.

It seems that all natural laws will fail during this time.

God's witnesses will shut up the heavens, turn rivers to blood, smite the earth with all kinds of plagues. Not only will these men have supernatural power - but the beast out of the abyss will demonstrate like power (Revelation 13). There will be a giant image, and the beast will cause the image to speak. He will pull fire down from Heaven in the sight of men. In the days of Moses, hell's ministers performed miracles, too. Read Exodus 7:10-13.

Today people are looking for the supernatural, the sensational. If a preacher is just an ordinary preacher, he does not get far. He must claim some super-duper gift. He must announce that he is able to perform tremendous miracles - and then the crowd comes. Those who are sponsored by liberals and modernists also have a large following, but ministers who preach pure Grace, pure Gospel, pure Salvation, will not draw a crowd, generally speaking. The fact that a man performs some miracle that seems supernatural does not mean that he is God's minister. Satan is powerful, too. I John 4:1 admonishes us to try the spirits, and be sure the spirit we follow is the Holy Spirit. These are dangerous days, and we cannot be too careful.

When the two witnesses are here, the powers of Heaven and hell will lock horns in the last gigantic conflict. This old world will be stained with blood, it will reel and rock - and great convulsions will shake the very fiber of the universe. During this time, Antichrist and his prime minister will perform miracles that would deceive the very elect of God if that were possible. This will occur during the "**day of the Lord.**" Read Amos 5:16-20 very carefully, and study it. These verses will enlighten you concerning the "day of the Lord."

When the seventh angel sounds, that will bring in the consummation of all things. The seventh angel is standing ready to sound, the moment these witnesses pass from the scene of action. The two witnesses are here on earth at the time when judgment from God is hastening to a climax. The affairs of earth are being swiftly brought to a close.

Now let us look at the nature of the work of these two witnesses: They are armed with fire (Hebrews 12:29).

During the time of their ministry in Jerusalem, if anyone tries to stop them or hurt them they will consume their enemies with fire.

During the first days of Christianity many of God's dear children paid with their lives. They sealed their testimony at the burning stake, or were fed to beasts in the arena at Rome. But it will not be so in this day.

These men not only work through supernatural power, but they also have at their command any and all things to protect them from death. **"Thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed"** (Deuteronomy 28:23,24).

During the time of their witnessing, these messengers will shut up Heaven, and the sky will become as brass.

Without any rain for three-and-a-half years the ground will become hard as iron, and the elements will be filled with dust. Their work will not only consist of shutting up the sky and turning the earth into a dustbowl but what water is left will be turned into blood.

That is not all, beloved! These men have power to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they wish. They prove by this unusual supernatural power that they are sent by Almighty God, and that He has power to utterly put down and destroy all who resist Him and follow ungodliness.

The prophecy of these two witnesses . . . the miracles they perform, the plagues they bring upon the earth . . . will not turn the masses from Antichrist to Christ. But their prophecy will cause a remnant to turn from the beast. During the closing days of time, before the great eternity of eternities begins, God will send to earth a message of mercy through these two witnesses and other ordained ministers of God whom we have discussed in previous chapters.

Concerning the days of the Antichrist, we read, **"I will send you Elijah the prophet . . . and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse"** (Malachi 4:5,6). Scholars tell us that the word here used for curse is the same Hebrew word God used when He told Israel to curse (EXTERMINATE) the Canaanites . . . that is, utterly destroy their cities and annihilate the people."

If Elijah and Moses did not come at this time, there would be universal acceptance of the Antichrist as God, and God would completely exterminate all creatures on earth; but the message of Elijah, Moses and others will cause a remnant to believe on the Lord Jesus as God's Christ, and God will have mercy on that remnant (Acts 16:31). It is true that the masses will worship Antichrist and accept him as God.

The career of these two witnesses, though illustrious and crowded with miracles from start to finish, will be very brief - only three and one-half years . . . 1,260 days - a very short ministry for such great witnesses as Moses and Elijah. They will be God-protected. No power on earth or in hell can touch them until they have completed their testimony. When their work is finished, they then become vanquishable - and are vanquished.

Verse 7 tells us that when the two witnesses have finished their testimony, the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, will overcome them, and kill them. What form of death they will suffer is not stated, although during the reign of the Antichrist, beheading is prevalent (Revelation 20:4).

We are told that they will not be buried. Their dead bodies will be left lying in the streets of Jerusalem, “**spiritually called Sodom and Egypt.**” (Note how careful the Holy Spirit is to tell us that the city is spiritually, not literally, Sodom and Egypt.) Thank God, the Holy Spirit makes it clear when something is to be spiritualized or symbolized. I take Revelation literally except where it is clear that it is symbolic or spiritual. Men mistake God’s mind and pervert His Word when they refuse to accept and interpret the Bible just as the Holy Spirit dictated it to holy men of old, and they wrote it down.

Jerusalem is not literally Sodom, but spiritually is likened unto that city. Read Isaiah 1:9,10; Deuteronomy 32:30-33; Jeremiah 23:14. Jerusalem is spiritually likened unto Egypt because of its gross idolatry; and idolatry will prevail in the days of the two witnesses (Ezekiel 23:3-19).

The statement “**where also our Lord was crucified**” identifies the city as Jerusalem. The place where the bodies of the witnesses were left was in the city street - a public thoroughfare - a place where more people passed than any other spot. The fact that they were denied burial is an outrage on common decency and humanity. It is filled with significance. It was no accident that the bodies of these two witnesses were not buried. Even the vilest of criminals were granted burial the same day of their execution (Deuteronomy 21:22, 23). But all law and decency is set aside in regard to these fire-blowing prophets who had tormented the area for three-and-a-half years, and who, for that length of time, could not be destroyed.

The bodies of these men lying in the public street testified to the most extraordinary malignity, spite and hatred with which they were regarded. Their enemies were not satisfied to kill them - they actually gloated over their decaying bodies for eighty-four long hours!

People passed the dead bodies - and mocked. “**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.**”

Church history tells us that when John Huss was burned at the stake, his enemies held banquets and danced, making merry that he was dead! Satan’s dupes are so insane with lust and so blind to God’s judgment that they think since these two witnesses are dead, things will level off, settle down - and they will enjoy peace again in the city that is spiritually as Sodom was. They are so ignorant of God’s program they do not know that much worse judgment is just ahead. How pitiful is the man who is so easily blinded by Satan!

Cain killed Abel - and probably buried him in a shallow grave, thinking he had covered up his crime. But nothing is hidden from the eyes of God. the Blood of Abel cried out from the ground, revealing Cain’s sin.

God will allow the beast to kill His two witnesses when they have completed their ministry of prophecy, and for three-and-a-half days their bodies will lie in the public street. But God is not yet through with earth's dwellers.

The Jews believe that the spirit of a dead man hovers near the body for three days. That is the reason when Jesus came to the tomb of Lazarus He waited until the fourth day. Had He raised Lazarus on the third day, the Jews would not have acclaimed it a miracle because the spirit would still be near the body for three full days; but Lazarus came forth on the fourth day. These two witnesses will lie in the street for three days plus a half day - and therefore the Jews will know that according to Jewish belief the spirit has departed from the body. When three and one-half days are over, something extraordinary and extremely unusual, happens:

- The two witnesses are dead.
- Parties are in progress.
- Gifts are being exchanged.
- The whole country is jubilant.

But . . . the scene changes: **“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 party came to an abrupt end. Gift-passing abruptly ceased. There has never been anything happen on earth that could stir people like two dead bodies which instantaneously stand up and begin living, after having deteriorated in the sun for several days.

“The triumph of the wicked is short” . . . so saith the Word of God. I wonder what the people thought when they met these two witnesses coming down the street, very much alive? I wonder what some folks who may read these lines are going to think when the monster the Bible calls death comes to their bedside and demands their departure? Think it over! It is appointed unto man once to die - and after death there is a judgment - and you will be there!

Verse 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.”**

When Jesus ascended as recorded in Acts 1:9-11 He was taken up in a cloud out of the sight of the disciples, who stood amazed, gazing into the heavens in the direction of His disappearance. While the disciples gazed steadfastly toward Heaven, two men appeared - two messengers from Heaven, dressed in white - and gave to these disciples the assurance that **“this same Jesus will so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into Heaven.”**

I wonder if they were making plans to put these two fellows to death a second time, when they began to slowly rise toward the sky? Perhaps they were having a meeting of the council to determine just what to do . . . whether to lock them up, or chop them up. They never reached a decision, because THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY TOOK THEM UP. The mob stood on the ground, horrified. One day soon, every born again blood-washed believer will be caught out of this earth instantaneously - in a split second, in the twinkling of an eye - to meet the Lord in the clouds just above the earth. That will be a day of amazement for unbelievers when they discover that all believers have been taken out of the earth.

THE SECOND WOE

Revelation 11:13-14:

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.

As the two witnesses begin their ascension the earth begins to tremble, groan, and go into a mighty convulsive earthquake. One-tenth of Jerusalem is leveled.

Seven thousand die! This happens the same hour the two witnesses are taken up to be with the Lord in the air. **“The second woe is past . . . “**

“ . . . Behold, the third woe cometh quickly.” Things are gaining in momentum. God is bringing a quick conclusion to man’s wicked control of earth. Notice the Scripture says, **“A GREAT EARTHQUAKE.”** God deals in earthquakes. Many times in Scripture it is recorded that God sent an earthquake:

- When Jesus died on the Cross there was a great earthquake (Matthew 27: 51).

- When Paul and Silas prayed in the Philippi an jail, God answered their prayer with an earthquake (Acts 16:26).

- At the opening of the sixth seal there was an earthquake so great that mountains and islands were shaken loose (Revelation 6:12).

- In Revelation 16:18 we are told there will be a great earthquake like no earthquake that has ever been.

Man spends millions to build bombs to blow up cities.

God needs no bombs! He speaks a word - and His word surpasses any bomb man ever had or ever will have.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

Revelation 11:15-19:

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

In verse 15 we have the resumption of the trumpet judgments. The Church is safe with Jesus in the air, and at this time will have a grandstand seat in the heavens. (The Bride is seen in Heaven from chapter four through 19:10.) In Revelation 19:11-16 we see the Bride coming in the air on white horses.

At this time, Jesus has removed the seals from the seven-sealed book that contains the redemption terms of the earth. All creation is now to be delivered from the curse. The angel announced in Revelation 10:6 that God's dealings with earth's dwellers are almost over, and righteousness is about to take over in the earth.

When the seventh angel sounds, there will be no little stir in Heaven. John heard "**great voices.**" The announcement was that the kingdoms of this world had become the kingdoms of our God.

Man and the devil have been in power for six thousand years, but praises be to our God, the Lord is taking over what rightfully belongs to Him (Psalm 24:1). He is about to take His seat on His throne (Isaiah 9:6,7; Luke 1:32). He will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem, and the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

The curse will be lifted and we will have "**peace on earth, good will toward men,**" as announced the night Jesus was born. We will have the peace the politicians have talked about but have done very little to bring about.

In verse 16 the four and twenty elders fall upon their faces and worship God. They cry out, "**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.**" Jesus came the first time as a babe in a manger - a tender Lamb. He is coming the second time in the Revelation in great power, taking vengeance on them that know not God. He will roar out of Zion, "**the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.**"

Here we approach the grand climax of the affairs of the ungodly on earth. "**The ungodly are not so but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish**" (Psalm 1:4-6).

"For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

“The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the Lord upholdeth the righteous” (Psalm 37:9-17).

The judgments that follow after the sounding of the seventh trumpet are the most intense, the most ghastly, the most remarkable and the most numerous - both in Heaven and on earth - anywhere outlined in the Word of God.

Truly, these remaining chapters of Revelation record the time of Jacob’s Trouble, the time of Great Tribulation.

There were many mighty wonders present when God delivered Israel out of the land of Egypt and led them on into the Promised Land. There were wonders in the air, in the waters, the trees, the rocks and clouds. There were marvels and miracles that stand out among the greatest of bygone days; but nothing to compare with what happens after the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

When Jesus was born, and during His earthly life and at the time of His death, there were also great wonders among the angels, the stars, the elements and on earth among men - both living and dead - which give us a divine story never told before. However, neither of these - nor all combined - can compare with the overwhelming intensity of the manifestations which attend and follow the sounding of the seventh trumpet. When the blast of the trumpet goes forth, John declares he heard **“great voices.”**

As we study the remaining portion of chapter 11 and the chapters down through 19:11, we will hear voices like unto many waters . . . great thunder . . . harpers with their harps . . . a Mighty Angel flying through Heaven with such a Voice that it can be heard throughout every square inch of the universe . . . angels shouting for the fall of Babylon . . . another voice crying, **“Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from this day forward,”** and another voice calling to Jesus to thrust in the sickle and reap.

Another great voice calls for the pouring out of the bowls of the wrath of God . . . another voice cries, **“It is done!”** The voices cry, **“Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!”**

Along with these, there are still other great voices from the heavenly world crying out praises to God as He takes over the reins of the earth and closes out wickedness, filling the earth with righteousness as promised from the beginning.

In Revelation 5, when Jesus took the seven-sealed book from the hand of **“Him that sitteth upon the throne,”** there was quite a commotion in Heaven. The act performed here was the beginning of the fulfillment of the redemption of all creation. When Jesus was found worthy to open the book, He took it and began removing the seals.

This seventh trumpet is found under the last of the seals. From the moment Jesus took the book until this moment, all along the way we have seen the unfolding judgments. During the entire course of events there has been much heavenly interest and excitement. But when the seventh trumpet sounds, everything in Heaven and all creation breaks out with thunderous praises, shouts, “**Amens!**” and songs of victory.

The four and twenty elders fall upon their faces. When the Lamb took the book in chapter 5, the elders fell down and gave thanks and praises - but here they humble themselves to a much greater degree . . . they are on their faces. These four and twenty elders represent the first-born of the resurrection . . . those who will be raised and those who will be translated when the Rapture takes place. They are the seniors of Heaven’s redeemed. They are the ones “**counted worthy to escape the woes that will come upon the whole earth.**”

They are already glorified - that is, at this point. That does not diminish their interest in the on-goings of earth’s dwellers. They already have their golden crowns - but that does not withdraw their sympathy from those who are still under the iron hand of Antichrist here on earth.

There is no vanity nor selfishness in Heaven - no pride in Heaven, no vaunting of authority. These crowned elders, these “seniors of Heaven,” are more concerned over the pending conflicts and victories yet to be won than they were over those through which they had come in order to win their crowns of gold.

- They know that the destroyer of earth (the devil) is not yet destroyed.
- They know the great white Throne Judgment is ahead.
- They know the rewards to all the faithful have not yet been passed out.

The meek shall inherit the earth - but they have not yet done so. The devil still remains out of the pit, and therefore the victory of victories is yet to be won. The elders know that.

But - the trumpet which brings all this to pass and brings to a climax all judgments, is now sounding in the ears of these “kings and priests.” They could not keep their seats. They fell prostrate on their faces before the Lamb.

In verse 18 the nations of the earth are very angry.

The time of God’s great wrath is come. God is about to judge the wicked in final judgment; He is about to reward all of His prophets and servants. There will be a new Heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. The saints will be put on display in the Pearly white City. Satan will be put in the pit. All sin and all unrighteousness must be removed from the earth. The Antichrist and the wicked will be put down. They become exceedingly angry, and in chapter twelve a great War breaks out between God and the devil.

In verse 19 the temple of God is opened. Did you know there is a literal temple in Heaven? There was seen in the temple the ark of His testament. There were lightnings and voices and thunderings and an earthquake and great hail.

The tabernacle and the temple of the Jews were copies of the tabernacle and temple in Heaven. **“LOOK THAT THOU MAKE THEM AFTER THEIR PATTERN WHICH WAS SHEWED THEE IN THE MOUNT!”** (Exodus 25:40). The Holy Spirit spoke to Paul in these words concerning the tabernacle and the temple: **“.. . patterns of things in the heavens.”**

There is a temple in Heaven.

There is a tabernacle in Heaven. And one time in the past, Heaven and earth’s worship was very close together.

God visited His creatures in the Garden of Eden and spoke directly to many in the Old Testament era. But of course, sin appeared in the Garden and wrecked the perfect unity and harmony between man and God. But thank God, the second Adam, the Lamb of God, has redeemed all by His Blood - that is, all who will come to God by Him.

And one day that sweet union between Heaven and earth will be restored. The Lord Jesus said, **“After this manner . . . pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.”** One day the oneness between Heaven and earth will be restored. This is clearly taught in Revelation chapters 21 and 22.

When the temple in Heaven is open, John sees **“the ark of God’s covenant.”** All the covenants and promises of God to His people are in that ark. God’s solemn promises cannot be broken - they are forever settled in Heaven. His engagements, His appointments with His people, are there. In that **“SACRED CASKET”** they have been stored safely and preserved under the protecting hand of the Lord God in Heaven.

Not one word of God’s promises is obsolete, dead, or forgotten. God cannot lie, He cannot prove untrue, He cannot break His promise. He will keep every item of His covenant and promise to faithful Abraham.

And now, at the ending of time, when all promises are to be fulfilled, that treasure box, that sacred casket, appears. Where? In the temple of God that was opened In Heaven when the seventh trumpet sounded.

The study of the ark in the Old Testament is very interesting. God’s blessings went along with the ark.

- The Jordan River rolled back beneath the shadow of the ark
- The walls of Jericho fell down before it;
- The enemies of God were scattered when the ark appeared.

Where it rested the thousands of Israel dwelt in safety. Its appearance here is a token of the recurrence of all these wonders, but on a more complete, more magnificent and sublime scale than in the Old Testament era.

The appearance of the ark announces the speedy fulfillment of all that God has spoken, all that He has promised concerning the earth, the righteous, the wicked, and all creation (Romans 8:18-23).

As we close this tremendous chapter I ask you, dear reader - are you born again? Are you a child of God?

Are you washed in the Blood? That is one thing we can know for sure. If you do not know for sure that your sins are washed away, bow your head and accept the Lord Jesus Christ right now; then if you die, your spirit will return to God who gave it, your body will return to dust. When the Rapture takes place, your body will be raised incorruptible, your spirit will enter the glorified body like unto Jesus' body (I John 3:1-3).

If Jesus comes while you are living, you will cheat death and be caught up to meet Jesus in the clouds in the air (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). But if you reject Jesus, if you die you will open your eyes in hell - and if you are living when the Rapture occurs you will be left to go through the fury of the Great Tribulation period.

~ end of chapter 11 ~

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