

The Book Of Revelation Study 51

Revelation 11:1-14 (NKJV)

¹ Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.

² But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.

³ And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.

⁵ And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.

⁶ These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

⁷ When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.

⁸ And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

⁹ Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves.

¹⁰ And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

¹¹ Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.

¹² And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.

¹³ In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴ The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

As we mentioned in our last study God always keeps himself a witness or two to call sinners to repentance.

This time in history is no different.

In the New Testament, as in the Old, faithful preachers called for repentance and faith, offering all sinners the hope of forgiveness in Christ.

Chief among those preachers was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Mark 1:38 (NKJV)

³⁸ But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth."

The preachers of the New Testament included John the Baptist, Peter, Stephen, Phillip, and the most prolific of them all, the apostle Paul.

They in turn pass the truth of the gospel to a next generation of godly preachers, who passed it down to other preachers.

2 Timothy 2:2 (NKJV)

² And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

There was also Titus, and the prophets and apostles of the churches, as well as the early church elders and overseers.

Along with the many unknown preachers through the ages there have been notable proclaimers of the gospel, such as Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Chrysostom, Irenaeus, Wycliff, Huss, Tyndale, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Latimer, Knox, Bunyan, Wesley, Whitefield, Maclaren, Edwards, Spurgeon, and a host of others down to the present day.

In the future, during Earth's darkest hour, God will raise up two exceptional and powerful preachers. They will fearlessly proclaim the gospel during the last three and one half year Tribulation, the period that Jesus called "*the great tribulation*" (*Matt 24:21 Rev 7:14*).

During that time of horrific divine judgments on the earth, of rampaging hordes of demons terrorizing and slaughtering millions of people, and wickedness rampaging unrestrained, their gospel preaching along with that of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (*Rev 7:1-10*), the "*angel flying in mid-heaven*" (*Rev 14:6*), and the testimonies of other believers alive during that time, will be a final expression of God's grace offered to repentant believing sinners.

In addition to preaching the gospel, these two preachers will proclaim God's judgment on the wicked world. Their ministry will likely stretch from the midpoint of the Tribulation until just before the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

That trumpet will herald the pouring out of the rapid fire bowl judgments, the battle of Armageddon, and the return of Christ.

During that period they will declare that the disasters befalling the world are the judgments of God. They will participate in fulfilling the words of the Lord Jesus Christ that the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come (*Matt 24:14*).

They will also be used by God to bring Salvation to Israel.

Before introducing these two faithful witnesses, John records a fascinating incident in which he himself took part, and incident that sets the stage for the arrival of the two preachers.

THE TEMPLE MEASURED

Revelation 11:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.

² But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.

Occasionally in Revelation the apostle John plays an active role in his visions. After his renewed commission to write the prophecies yet to come in Revelation John again became involved in one of the very visions he was recording.

We read, “**He was given a measuring rod like a staff**, by either the same angel who spoke with him in **10:8** or the strong angel he spoke with in **10:9-11**

Kalamos (measuring rod) refers to a reed like plant that grew in the Jordan Valley to a height of fifteen to twenty feet.,

It had a stalk that was hollow and lightweight, yet rigid enough to be used as a walking staff

Ezekiel 29:6 (NKJV)

⁶ "Then all the inhabitants of Egypt Shall know that I am the Lord, Because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel.

This reed could be shaved down into a pen;

3 John 1:13 (NKJV)

¹³ I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink;

The stalks thought they were long and lightweight, were ideal for use as measuring rods.

In Ezekiel’s vision and angel used such a rod to measure the millennial temple;

Ezekiel 40:3 (NKJV)

³ He took me there, and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze. He had a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand, and he stood in the gateway.

Here John was told to **measure the temple of God**, including **the altar, and those who worship in it**.

Obviously, this is not an attempt or effort to determine its physical dimensions, since none are given, but was conveying some important truth beyond architecture.

It could have indicated, as on occasion in the Old Testament, that God sometimes marks things out for destruction;

2 Samuel 8:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ After this it came to pass that David attacked the Philistines and subdued them. And David took Gath from the hand of the Philistines.

² Then he defeated Moab. Forcing them down to the ground, he measured them off with a line. With two lines he measured off those to be put to death, and with one full line those to be kept alive. So the Moabites became David's servants, and brought tribute.

2 Kings 21:12-13 (NKJV)

¹² therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Behold, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle.

¹³ And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.

But John's measuring is better understood as signifying ownership, defining the parameters of God's possessions.

Revelation 21:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ *And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.*

Zechariah 2:1-5 (NKJV)

¹ *Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand.*

² *So I said, "Where are you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length."*

³ *And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, who said to him, "Run, speak to this young man, saying: 'Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it.*

⁵ *For I,' says the Lord, 'will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.' "*

This measuring signified something good, since what was not measured was evil (v2)

It is best to see it as God's measuring off Israel, symbolized by her temple, for salvation and for His special protection, preservation, and favor.

The prophecies yet to be given to John will thus distinguish between God's favor toward Israel and His wrath on the pagan world.

That truth was no doubt very encouraging to John. At the time he wrote Revelation, Israel's future looked bleak.

A quarter century earlier, the Romans had brutally suppressed the Jewish revolt of AD 66-70 slaughtering over one million Jews, devastating Jerusalem, and burning the temple.

But in spite of that massive destruction, ***"God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew"*** *Rom 11:2* And will preserve them, until that future day when the believing remnant of the nation will be saved.

Romans 11:4-5 (NKJV)

⁴ *But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."*

⁵ *Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

Romans 11:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ *And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;*

Zechariah 12:10-14 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

¹¹ *In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mournings at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.*

¹² *And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves;*

¹³ *the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and*

their wives by themselves;

¹⁴ all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves.

Zechariah 13:1 (NKJV)

¹ "In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.

Zechariah 13:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the Lord, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it:

⁹ I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.' "

Naos (temple) does not refer to the entire temple complex, but to the inner temple, made up of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.

The **alter** is probably the brazen altar, located outside the inner sanctuary in the courtyard since that is where **those who worship** in the temple would have gathered.

The people were never permitted into the inner temple; only the priests could enter the Holy Place

Luke 1:8-10 (NKJV)

⁸ So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division,

⁹ according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

The worshipers in John's vision depict a remnant of believing Jews alive during the Tribulation who are worshipping God.

The presence of the temple in this vision of the time of great tribulation brought with it the encouraging realization that the temple, destroyed by the Romans many years before John wrote, would be rebuilt in the future.

The Bible mentions 5 temples.

- 1. Solomon's**
- 2. Zerubbabel**
- 3. Herods**
- 4. During the Tribulation, with the Jewish sacrificial system restored Matt 24:15; 2Thess 2:4**
- 5. The Lord's building of the Temple during the Millennium**

John is here seeing the Tribulation Temple the fourth one.

It will be built early in the first half of the Tribulation under the patronage and protection of Antichrist.

The reinstatement of the temple worship will reawaken interest on the part of many Jews in the Messiah.

Many will realize;

Hebrews 10:4 (NKJV)

⁴ For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

God will use that dissatisfaction to prepare their hearts for the day when He will

Zechariah 12:10-14 (NKJV)

¹⁰ "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

¹¹ In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mournings at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

¹² And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves;

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¹ "In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.

Note also John's instructions on measuring the temple included a significant omission.

He was commanded, **Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it.**

The reference is to the court of the Gentiles, located outside the courtyard containing the brazen altar.

It marked the boundary beyond which Gentiles were forbidden to go.

In the New Testament times, the Romans had given the Jews the right to execute any Gentile who went beyond the court of the Gentiles.

For a Gentile to do so was to defile the temple. In fact, it was the false charge that Paul had brought Gentiles into the temple that sparked the riot that led to his arrest and imprisonment

Acts 21:27-28 (NKJV)

²⁷ Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him,

²⁸ crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."

God redeems Gentiles and will continue to do so during this age and the time of tribulation. But He will reject those unbelieving Gentiles who have united with Satan and the beast and oppressed His covenant people, Israel.

Now the reason for not measuring the outer court;

Revelation 11:2 (NKJV)

for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.

Forty two months (1260 days; three and one-half years) correspond to the overtly evil career of Antichrist, which dominates the last half of the Tribulation

That period will be the culmination of the “times of the Gentiles”

Luke 21:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The thousands of years during which Gentile nations have in various ways occupied and oppressed the **holy city** of Jerusalem.

1. Assyria
2. Babylon
3. Medo-Persia
4. Greece
5. Rome
6. Turks
7. British
8. Arabs
9. **Antichrist and his demonic and human cohorts will surpass all other oppressors.**

During this same forty two month period, God will shelter many Israelites in a place He has prepared for them in the wilderness. Some speculate the rock city of Petra.

Revelation 12:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

So despite the maniacal efforts of Antichrist to destroy Israel, God will measure off Israel to save, preserve, and protect the nation.

Zechariah 13:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the Lord, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it:

⁹ I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.' "

Instrumental in their conversion will be a unique, invincible two man evangelistic team, which John introduces.

And which we will consider in our next study.