

THE REVELATION

LESSON 18- Revelation 11: The Two Witness & the Final Trumpet

Intro:

Martyr-

BIG IDEA: God _____ His servants even when the world _____ them.

¹Then 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, ²but 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. ³And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

- John has the task of _____ the temple (Ezekiel 40-47). He is marking off the people of God, the people who truly worship there.
- He does not measure the courts _____ the temple proper. The nations will _____ Jerusalem for 3 ½ years.
- The temple will be _____ during that time.
- During that time, 2 _____ are given authority to _____.
- As 2 witnesses they fulfill the minimum standard for finding people _____ & deserving of _____.
- The sackcloth means they are crying out for _____ in the face of judgment.

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
The time frame is the time of the Reformation. The days are years, representing the 1,260 years of papal power. The temple refers to the living temple: the church. The rod represents the Word of God by which the Reformers measured the church.	The days refer to either the Jewish War or Nero's persecution (or both). The witnesses refer to real prophets in Jerusalem or the civil and religious authority in Jerusalem. Both Ezekiel & John's actions define the true spiritual temple in light of	This refers to the 3 ½ years of the Tribulation. The witnesses refer to prophets yet to appear or a larger body speaking against Jerusalem sometime in the future. Since there currently is no temple in Jerusalem, his return seems less than immanent.	This refers to the whole church age. It is not literal, but points to a limited amount of time (and used to synchronize the other events viewed lasting as the same amount of time). The temple is symbolic of the church (1 Peter 2, Eph. 2). It is measured

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<p>The witnesses are the Waldenses & Albigenses who resisted the papacy and were persecuted.</p>	<p>impending destruction of the physical temple. The language of the trampling alludes to Luke 21:24 prior to the fall of Jerusalem.</p>	<p>John is distinguishing between faithful Jews and unfaithful ones. God will protect faithful Israel, but destroy apostate Israel. People differ as to whether this refers to the first or 2nd half of the Tribulation.</p>	<p>for preservation. The court refers to nominal Christians. The witnesses are the church during that age.</p>
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Albigenses: they were a _____ Christian sect that opposed the Pope. They were _____ by Pope Innocent III in a crusade after the Franciscans failed to convert them. They were far from orthodox!

Talk it Out: Which makes more sense, for John to measure the temple prior to AD 70 or for John to measure a futuristic temple that will be judged just like the one in AD 70 was? In other words, is God going to repeat his judgment upon Israel? Or are we to see this as a judgment upon the church (1 Peter 4:17)?

⁴These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. ⁵And 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. ⁶They 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. ⁷And 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, ⁸and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. ⁹For 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, ¹⁰and 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. ¹¹But 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. ¹²Then 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. ¹³And 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. ¹⁴ The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.

- John uses the symbols of the olive trees (Zech. 4?) and the lampstands (Rev. 1?) to say something about the _____.
- They are able to _____ themselves from their enemies during the time granted to them.

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- They are like _____, able to stop the _____.
- When their time is done and they have finished prophesying, _____ begins.
- _____ leads the rebellion, and the witnesses will be _____.
- _____ is now referred to as _____ & _____ - both brought under God's judgment for _____ & _____ God's people.
- The witnesses are _____ and taken into heaven much like Elijah and Enoch.
- Jerusalem begins to be _____.

Read Zechariah 4. How does this help us to understand the olive trees and the lampstands? Who are the 2 key figures in Zechariah? What offices do they hold?

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
<p>The witnesses represent the long line of faithful witnesses prior to the Reformation. They speak judgment, symbolized by the fire. The plagues fell upon the papacy. Christian burial was denied to those Rome deemed heretics and destroyed. The resurrection of the witnesses is viewed as the Reformation. The earthquake is a symbol for the political upheavals that hit Europe during the Reformation. 7 provinces or countries fell away from Rome's power.</p>	<p>In connection with Zechariah, the witnesses represent the leaders of the church (Joshua) and the state (Zerubbabel). For Chilton, they represent all the witnesses of the Old Covenant. For Russell, they are James and Peter. Respectively the death refers to the end of law and order, the death of Christ and the persecution of the church by Jerusalem & Rome. In AD 68 two Jewish high priests were killed during the siege of Jerusalem. The earthquake is one of the judgments on Jerusalem killing many.</p>	<p>The 42 months refers back to Daniel 9:27 (it does, but not like he thinks it does). The 2 witnesses are real people who preach in Tribulation era Jerusalem. Some think they are Moses and Elijah (the Law and Prophets) relying on Malachi 4:5-6. Their resurrection may or may not prompt the conversion of the Jews (Lindsey thinks it will).</p>	<p>The witnesses are the witnessing church in a symbolic Jerusalem through the entirety of the church age. Hendriksen thinks they refer to Word and Sacrament. The time of the trampling by the Gentiles is often seen as the whole church age. Those who seek to destroy the church will reap God's wrath. The beast is often seen as the same beast from chapter 13- symbolizing political power opposed to God's kingdom. The defeat of the church will not last long, symbolized by 3 ½ days. The church, apparently defeated, rises up again. The whole of the church age is one of</p>

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			<p>tribulation. Derek Thomas sees this as the resurrection that accompanies the return of Christ. Yet, the earthquake is seen as connected to the final judgment.</p>
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Talk it Out: What are some of the strengths & weaknesses of each view?

“The heretics Huss and Jerome seem now to be alive again in the person of Luther.” **Pope Hadrian in 1523**

“Christ’s holy temple-city is secure and vulnerable; secured from apostasy and divine wrath by the power and grace of the Lamb but vulnerable to attack through persecution by the world’s non-covenant peoples.” **Dennis Johnson**⁶¹

“We who belong to Christ cannot but share in his victory. So the martyr’s death is not defeat, but victory in union with Christ.” **Vern Poythress**⁶²

Take Away: Despite persecution that may lead to death, God is still _____. His people do not perish, but still _____ of his grace. They will see the _____ of God’s people and God’s vengeance upon their enemies.

¹⁵Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." ¹⁶And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷saying,

"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. ¹⁸The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth."

¹⁹Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

- Finally the 7th trumpet is blown. The _____ of Christ over the _____ takes place.
- The elders fell down before God to worship in _____.
- Allusion to Psalm 2: God has begun to _____ out his _____ upon the nations.

⁶¹ Johnson, pp. 168.

⁶² Poythress, pp. 131.

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- The dead will be _____, and his saints _____.
- John sees into heaven, beholding the ark of the covenant and natural phenomenon.

None by the great high priest could see the ark of the covenant, and only once a year. What does it mean that John sees the ark?

“The ark was the most holy object in the tabernacle. It was normally concealed from sight behind the tabernacle curtains. The revealing of this innermost object signifies that God has fully revealed his glory, both the glory of his law and of his mercy.” **Vern Poythress**⁶³

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
This trumpet blast forwards us to the end of the age. This blast brings us to the 7 bowls of Rev. 16 which are poured out at the end of time. The bowls begin in the French Revolution.	This does not refer to the end of time but the fall of Jerusalem which in Mt. 24 includes the sign of the Son of Man taking up his authority over the nations. The kingdom of Israel comes to an end, becoming the spiritual kingdom of Christ. The martyrs will be vindicated by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Jay Adams notes that this ends the first prophecy with the second beginning in 13.	This is viewed at the 2 nd coming of Christ to establish his millennial kingdom. This passage would seem to present problems for the dispensational view of the resurrection. Typically they say dead Christians are raised at the Rapture and everyone else at the end of the millennium, not the beginning. Hal Lindsey adds a 3 rd resurrection, that of the OT believers and believers who died during the Tribulation.	This trumpet begins the consummation of the reign of Christ. It is the 2 nd picture of the end. God’s power is displayed in all the natural phenomenon.

Talking it Out: None of these views is without problems. Which view has the most and least problems?

“Despite the rage of its enemies, the church is secure in the presence of its holy champion.” **Dennis Johnson**⁶⁴

Conclusion:

⁶³ Poythress, pp. 131.

⁶⁴ Johnson, pp. 176.