

LESSON 13

THE TWO WITNESSES AND THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

Chapter 11 concludes the interlude between the sixth and the seventh trumpets that began in chapter 10. The primary purpose of this interlude was to explain what the church should do during the troubled times which were ahead. The chapter ends with the sounding of the seventh trumpet (11:14–18).

1. Why do some scholars consider Revelation 11 the most important chapter in the book?

THE TEMPLE TO BE MEASURED (11:1, 2)

In the previous chapter, John was thrust into the role of participant when he was told to take the little book and eat it (10:8–11). While on stage, he was given an additional task.

2. Who were those “who worship in” the temple (11:1)?
3. What is the temple in Revelation 11:1, 2?
4. If the temple is the church, what is the significance of measuring it?
5. What is the standard of measurement referred to as the “measuring rod like a staff” (11:1)?
6. What is the primary message of Revelation 11:1, 2?
7. What is the symbolism of the “forty-two months” (11:2)?
8. If the temple represents the church, what do the court and the city represent?

THE TWO WITNESSES PROPHECY (11:3–6)

The chapter continues with the story of the two witnesses. This series of scenes illustrates a threefold message of victory in the Book of Revelation: (1) the conflict between good and evil, (2) the apparent defeat of good, and (3) the ultimate victory of good.

9. How is 11:4 an adaptation of Zechariah?
10. What similarities exist between Revelation 11:6 and the lives of Moses and Elijah, and does this tell us that the two witnesses were literally Moses and Elijah?
11. Who are the two witnesses?

THE TWO WITNESSES ARE KILLED (11:7–10)

God's promise to protect His people did not mean that they would never be persecuted. This truth is brought out graphically in the story of the two witnesses. They were killed for their testimony. When this happened, it did not *look as if* truth had triumphed. Rather, it *appeared* that evil had been victorious. However, appearances can be deceiving.

12. What was "the great city" (11:8)?
13. In what way did the witnesses torment the earth dwellers?

THE TWO WITNESSES COME BACK TO LIFE (11:11–13)

As the carnal holiday swirled around the dead bodies, it seemed like all was lost. God's messengers had been silenced. However, God always has the last word.

14. What does the resurrection of the witnesses most likely represent?
15. What significance is there, if any, to the numbers "a tenth" and "seven thousand" in 11:13?
16. Did the survivors in 11:13 repent? Explain.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET SOUNDS (11:14–18)

For almost two chapters, the seventh angel has remained poised, instrument at hand, ready to sound. Finally, near the end of chapter 11, the anticipated announcement is heard: “The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly” (v. 14). Then, at long last, “the seventh angel sounded . . .” (v. 15).

17. Why is the phrase “and who is to come” missing from 11:17?
18. Since verses 15 and 17 are not teaching that God’s kingdom has yet to be established, what are they teaching about the kingdom?
19. Why were the nations “enraged” (11:18)?

THE TEMPLE OF GOD OPENED (11:19)

The comfort of chapter 11 is not finished. In verse 19, there is God’s response to the words of praise found in verses 17 and 18. As the song sank into silence, there burst on John’s sight a new vision of divine glory: the heavenly temple of God with the ark of the covenant inside.

20. What was the ark of the covenant, and what is its history?