

## ***The Tribulation Temple, Two Witnesses, & 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet***

### I. The Tribulation Temple & Trampling of Jerusalem

***(Revelation 11:1-2 NASB) “Then there was given to me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, “Get up and measure the temple [Naos] of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. 2 Leave out the courtyard which is outside the temple and do not measure it, because it has been given to the nations; and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.”***

- a. Right After John is shown the first 6 trumpet judgments and commissioned to be a forerunner messenger, God begins to share certain details with him related to the final 3 ½ years of this age. He begins by showing John the coming rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. The temple John see’s here is a literal temple in Jerusalem that will be rebuilt before Jesus returns (This is not a metaphorical statement of the Church). It’s important to note that the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D., so at the time John is receiving this revelation (96 A.D.) there currently was no temple in Jerusalem [*I mention this because preterists believe Revelation was written in the 60’s A.D and say that John literally went to measure the temple in Jerusalem at that time*].

i. Two words used for temple in the N.T.

1. “*Hieron*” – Used for the greater temple complex 72 times. Used once to refer to the temple of Artemis.
2. “*Naos*”- Used to refer to the literal temple (holy place & holy of holies) 32 times (including ***Revelation 11:1***). Used twice to refer to heathen temples. Used 9 times metaphorically (*because the presence of God dwells in believers*).

ii. The correct method of interpretation to understanding the meaning of words in the New Testament is to identify the surrounding context of those words. Because the word “*naos*” is used in ***Revelation 11:1***, we have to examine the passages surrounding context as well as other similar passages to decide if this is referring to a literal temple or a metaphorical temple.

1. The surrounding context of the temple ***Revelation 11*** includes this statement: “*those who worship in it*”. The plain reading of the text suggests the temple is a literal place with literal people worshipping in it.
2. Along with ***Revelation 11***, perhaps the premier New Testament text related to a literal future temple is ***2 Thessalonians 2:4***, which affirms the prophecies given by Daniel and Jesus related to a literal temple in Jerusalem at the end of the age.

***(2 Thessalonians 2:4 NASB) “Who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.”***

***(Daniel 8:11-12 NASB) “It even exalted itself to be equal with the Commander of the army; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His [Commander of the army – God] sanctuary was overthrown. 12 And because of an offense the army will be given to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will hurl truth to the ground and do as it pleases and be successful.***

***(Daniel 9:27 NASB) “And he will confirm a covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come the one who makes desolate, until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, gushes forth on the one who makes desolate.”***

***(Daniel 11:31 NASB) “Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation.”***

**(Daniel 11:36 NASB)** “Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt himself and boast against every god and will speak dreadful things against the God of gods; and he will be successful until the indignation is finished, because that which is determined will be done.”

**(Matthew 24:15 NASB)** “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place—let the reader understand...”

- b. **Revelation 11:1** refers to this tribulation temple as the “*temple of God*”, yet the antichrist will desecrate this temple at the time of the abomination of desolation. Though the scriptures don’t explicitly say this, I believe **Daniel 9:27** suggests that when the antichrist “*confirms/affirms a covenant*”, it means that he will be a catalytic proponent for the rebuilding of this tribulation temple [*which doesn’t have to be the full-blown temple, it could just be a tent*], and also the institution of sacrifices in that temple.
- c. John is given a measuring staff and told to measure the temple, the altar, and those who worship in it. God isn’t mostly telling John to actually measure the feet and inches of the temple and those who are in the temple, He’s telling John to weigh or evaluate with discernment what is happening in the temple.

**(Amos 7:7-8 NASB)** “...The Lord was standing by a vertical wall with a plumb line in His hand. 8 And the Lord said to me, “What do you see, Amos?” And I said, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said, “Behold I am about to put a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel. I will not spare them any longer.”

**(Daniel 5:26-27 NASB)** “This is the interpretation of the message: ‘Menē God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. 27 ‘Tekēl’ you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient.”

- i. The reason God tells John to evaluate the temple, its altar, and those who worship in it, is because the events and people in the temple are not all “good” or “bad”. There are obvious things to take place that are bad such as, the antichrist setting up His image in the temple. However, there will also be unbelieving yet God-fearing Jews participating in temple activities. This might feel irrelevant or “out of touch” with our personal lives now, but when Jerusalem and the temple are the primary conversation on the world stage, forerunner messengers must be able to speak about temple issues with confidence and clarity, which comes from evaluating with discernment.
- ii. A common temptation for many believers today is to assume that all of the activities related to the tribulation temple are blasphemies to God however, that’s not what scripture seems to show. The coming temple sacrifices do not provide a way to salvation (*Jesus is the only way to salvation*), however, we know that to some degree, some of these sacrifices are honoring to God, here’s why:
  - 1. The tribulation temple is referred to by this angelic being [*Jesus*] as, “The temple of God” (**Revelation 11:1**). **Daniel 8:11** calls the temple “His (*God’s*) temple” and the sacrifices “His (*God’s*) sacrifices”.
  - 2. If this temple were already an abomination to God before the antichrist sets up his image in it, it wouldn’t be considered THE abomination of DESOLATION. The only way to “desolate” something is if it were previously Holy.
  - 3. Paul continued to make sacrifices at the temple (**Acts 18:18 cf. Numbers 6:13; Acts 21:17-26; 24:17-18**).
- d. John is told not to measure the “*courtyard which is outside them temple*” because it “*has been given to the nations (gentiles)*”. Gentiles always had access to the outer court throughout history, however this verse says that the outer court “*has been given*” to the nations/gentiles. We know that during the Great Tribulation, gentiles will possess the outer court of the temple complex.

- i. **Perspective** – Currently on the temple mount in Jerusalem, Islam has the Dome of the Rock shrine (where the Jewish Temple used to be) and to south (but still on the temple mount) is the 3<sup>rd</sup> holiest site in Islam, the Al-Aqsa Mosque. This means that currently, the “outer court” is possessed by the gentiles (Islam). I believe this is exactly what **Revelation 11** is talking about. My presumption is that at some point, there will be some sort of agreement between Islam and the Jews to where the temple can be built yet the Muslims can still have the Al Aqsa Mosque.
- e. John is also told that the nations will “*trample the holy city for 42 months (3 ½ years)*”. The antichrist and his 10-nation confederation will trample Jerusalem during the great tribulation. While we saw a partial fulfillment of this in the siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., but at the end of the age, we will see it happen in it’s fullness.

## II. The Two Witnesses

**(Revelation 11:3-10 NASB)** “*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 wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; and so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way.* **6** *These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not 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 plague, as often as they desire.* **7** *When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them.* **8** *And their dead bodies will lie on the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.* **9** *Those from the peoples, tribes, languages, and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not allow their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb.* **10** *And those who live on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who live on the earth.* **11** *And after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them.* **12** *And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.”* *And they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them.* **13** *And at that time 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 coming quickly.”*

- a. The Strong Angel goes on to describe prophetic leaders of the church at the end of the age. He gives authority to two witnesses to prophesy for 1260 Days (42 months, 3 ½ years). These Christian prophets (**Revelation 11:8**) will operate in divine authority and be a strength and support to the Jewish people and the Church. These two witnesses are a global eschatological picture of the church God is currently raising up at the local and regional level throughout the earth.

**(Daniel 11:31-33 NASB)** “*Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation.* **32** *And by smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will be strong and take action.* **33** *And those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for many days.*

- i. **Clothed in sackcloth** – Representing sorrow and repentance (**Genesis 37:34; 2S Samuel 3:31; Esther 4:3; Jonah 3:5-7; Isaiah 37:1; 2 Kings 19:2; 1 Kings 21:27; Lamentation 2:10; Daniel 9:3; Psalm 30:11; Matthew 11:21**).
- ii. **Two olive trees & two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth** – This statement pulls from **Zechariah 4** to point out that empowering authority given to these two witnesses by God to accomplish the work of God in the hour they live. The Olive trees provide the oil that fuels the

lamps. Earlier in the book of Revelation, lampstands are referred to as churches. The two witnesses will fuel the church.

b. These two witnesses are given authority to do accomplish specific works at the end of the age. The same way Moses and Elijah partnered with God, the two witnesses will partner with God to extend His redemptive purposes on the earth.

- i. **To prophesy** – They will testify of Jesus, the end-time events, and preach repentance.
- ii. **To kill anyone who wants to harm them** – The two witnesses will breathe fire and kill those who try to harm them. Verse 5 says, they “must be killed in this way”. The word of the Lord will advance without hindrance in that hour. This is reminiscent of the prophet Elijah.

***(2 Kings 1:10 NASB) “But Elijah replied to the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men.”***

- iii. **Power to shut up the sky so rain will not fall** – They have authority from heaven to cause droughts to occur throughout the earth. This will dramatically harm the Antichrist Empire. This is too reminiscent of the prophet Elijah.

***(James 5:17 NASB) “Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.”***

- iv. **Power to turn waters into blood** – Cutting off the water supply will also be a huge hit to the Antichrist empire. They will demonstrate the power and authority of God when they do this. This is reminiscent of Aaron and Moses.

***(Exodus 7:20, 24 NASB) “So Moses and Aaron did just as the Lord had commanded. And he lifted up the staff and struck the water that was in the Nile in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants; and all the water that was in the Nile was turned into blood. 24 So all the Egyptians dug around the Nile for water to drink, because they could not drink from the water of the Nile.”***

- v. **To strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire** – They will operate in Holy partnership with Jesus to loose true and righteous judgments on the earth.
- c. The two witnesses are a picture of what the end-time church will operate in at the end of the age. God promised to pour out the spirit and power of Elijah on the church before He returns. Clearly the two witnesses operate in the Spirit and power of Elijah, but this will be available to the entire body of Christ during the Great Tribulation. I believe the church will step into this role as she begins to operate in unity as a family.

***(Malachi 4:5-6 NASB) “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. 6 He will turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and strike the land with complete destruction.”***

- d. Once they (two witnesses) finish their testimony, the antichrist will overcome them and kill them and leave their bodies on the streets of Jerusalem (vv.8 ***“Where also their Lord was crucified”***) for three and half days (*This scripture also refers to Jerusalem as Sodom and Egypt because of it’s hostility toward God*). The nations will look on their dead bodies and celebrate their deaths by sending gifts because these two prophets were a problem for the antichrist empire.
- e. After 3 ½ days God will resurrect the two witnesses and they’ll get called up to heaven in a cloud. Their enemies will see this happen, and will be filled with great fear. For a moment, Antichrist empire thought they had won, but when they realize they didn’t, they’ll be filled with fear. As the two witnesses are taken up to heaven, a great earthquake will take place and a 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the city will fall leaving 7,000

people dead. As a result, some people will repent (**vv.13**). I believe this is likely their final chance to repent before the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet.

### III. The Seventh and Final Trumpet

- a. Sometime after the two witnesses are caught up, the seventh angel sounds his trumpet. This takes place right at the end of the Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (**Daniel 9:24-27**, *the final 7 years of this age*). This is the most exciting event in human history as it includes the rapture of the church. The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet sounds for numerous days (**Revelation 10:7**) and in those days the "mystery of God" (**Colossians 2:2-3; Ephesians 1:9-10**) is finished.

**(Revelation 10:7 NASB)** "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He announced to His servants the prophets."

- b. **Revelation 11:15-19** also identifies 7 specific details related to the sounding of the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet.

**(Revelation 11:15-19 NASB)** "Then the seventh angel sounded; 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 will reign forever and ever." 16 And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying, "We give You thanks, Lord God, the Almighty, the One who is and who was, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. 18 And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." 19 And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder, and an earthquake, and a great hailstorm."

- i. **Aspect #1** - Jesus inherits the earth and the kingdoms of earth (**v.15**).
  - ii. **Aspect #2** - The 24 elders worship God (**v. 16-17**).
  - iii. **Aspect #3** – The nations are enraged and the dead are judged (*pronounced guilty*) sentenced to 1,000 years in Hades awaiting the Great White Throne judgment (**v. 18**).
  - iv. **Aspect #4** - The saints are raptured, evaluated, and rewarded (**v.18**).
  - v. **Aspect #5** - Those who destroy the earth are destroyed (**v. 18**). This includes the pouring out of the 7 bowls of wrath.
  - vi. **Aspect #6** - The temple in heaven is opened and the ark of His covenant appears in that temple (**v. 19**).
  - vii. **Aspect #7** - Natural disasters and weather patterns intensify including; flashes of lightning, sounds, peals of thunder, and an earthquake, and a great hailstorm (**v.19**).
- c. I've highlighted 4 other New Testament scriptures that speak about what happens at the sounding of the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet.

**(Matthew 24:29-31 NASB)** "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. 31 And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet blast, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other."

*(1 Corinthians 15:50-57 NASB) “Now I say this, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I am telling you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 But when this perishable puts on the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written: “Death has been swallowed up in victory. 55 Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Death, is your sting?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

*(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 NASB) “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as indeed the rest of mankind do, who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. 15 For we say this to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who remain, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore, comfort one another with these words.”*

*(2 Thessalonians 1:5-10 NASB) “This is a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you indeed are suffering. 6 For after all it is only right for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted, along with us, when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels 8 in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God, and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 These people will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes to be glorified among His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—because our testimony to you was believed.”*

### Questions For Discussion

1. What was one thing that was highlighted to you or stuck out in tonight’s teaching?
2. Did this teaching bring clarity to a thought or question you had related to the end times?
3. How does this teaching mobilize you to pray? *(1 Peter 4:7 NASB) “The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer”*