

Revelation 11:1-10

Verse 1

A measuring rod – Literally, “a reed like a rod.” This measuring rod was about 10’ long. Note Ezekiel 40:5, 42:16-19.

Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar and those who worship in it – The act of measuring probably signifies God’s ownership.

Measure the temple – Referring to the holy place and the holy of holies. This is evidently the temple that the Jews will build either before or during the tribulation period.

Measure the altar – Probably the brazen altar to which non-priests have access.

Measure those who worship in it – These are godly Jews who worship in the tribulation temple.

Verse 2

Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it – Literally, “cast out” which implies removal from divine favor. This corresponds to the court of the Gentiles. Not measuring the court of the Gentiles signifies exclusion from God’s favor.

For it has been given to the nations – Specifically hostile, unbelieving Gentiles.

Verse 2

They will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months – These Gentiles will oppress “the holy city,” Jerusalem, for a period of forty-two months. This period of forty-two months is mentioned a second time in Revelation 13:5.

- 7 years x 12 months = 84 months

- ½ of 84 is 42 or 3 ½ years, half of the tribulation period.

This 42 month period is the second half of the tribulation period known as the great tribulation. Compare Daniel 9:27 with Matthew 24:15-21. Daniel states the abomination of desolation will break his covenant with Israel in the middle of the tribulation. Jesus clarifies that this is the beginning of the great tribulation.

Verse 3

And I will grant authority to my two witnesses – The identity of the two witnesses is debated. 1 – Moses and Elijah restored to physical life. 2 – Enoch and Elijah because these two men never died physically (Gen. 5:24, 2 Kings 2:11). 3 – Two men who God will give the powers of Moses and Elijah.

They will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days – This is another designation for three and one half years.

- 7 years x 360 days = 2520 days

- ½ of 2520 days = 1260 days

It is debated whether this is the first or the second half of the tribulation. Daniel’s 70th week is divided into 3 ½ years by several designations in the Bible:

- *Forty-two months* – Revelation 11:2, 13:5
- *Twelve hundred and sixty days* – Revelation 11:3
- *One thousand two hundred and sixty days* – Revelation 12:6
- *A time and times and half a time* – Revelation 12:14, Daniel 7:25, Daniel 12:7

Verse 4

These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth – The two witnesses are described in similar fashion to Zerubbabel and Joshua who were anointed by God to be His messengers. Note Zechariah 4:2-14 where they are referred to lampstands and olive trees that “stand by the Lord.”

Verses 5-6

Fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies – The two witnesses are able to call down fire from heaven to devour their enemies in the same way Elijah did in 2 Kings 1:10-14.

They have the power to shut up the sky in order that rain may not fall during the days of their prophesying – Elijah also did the same. Note 1 Kings 17:1, Luke 4:25, and James 5:17.

They have power over the waters to turn them into blood – Moses was given the power to turn the Nile to blood in Exodus 7:17-21.

To smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire – Moses was able, by the Lord’s command, to smite the Egyptians with plagues (Gen. 9:14). The two witnesses are authorized to use this power, “as often as they desire.”

Verses 7-8

The beast that comes up out of the abyss – The Antichrist. This is the first of 36 references to “the beast” in Revelation. He has his origin in “the abyss,” the abode of Satan and his demons.

Will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them – God will allow the beast to slay them.

Their dead bodies will lie in the street – This was a shameful indignity for anyone in Biblical times.

The great city...mystically called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified – This is Jerusalem, which is spiritually compared to Sodom and Egypt because of its wickedness and antagonism toward God.

Verses 9-10

The peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days – Probably because of television and the internet.

Those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry; and they will send gifts to one another – They will probably be deluded into thinking the two witnesses were the source of all their problems!

Those who dwell on the earth will celebrate because they no longer have to listen to the messages from God.