

THE TRIBULATION TEMPLE
REV. 11:1-2 / 9-26-18 / WED

INTRODUCTION

- A. We are still in the parenthetical passage that began in Chapter Ten.
- B. Chapter 11 is one of the most difficult passages in Revelation.
- C. Today we look at the possibility of yet another Temple being rebuilt in Jerusalem-11:1.

Revelation 11:1-2

¹ I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshipers there.

² But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.

- D. There are two different interpretations of this Temple.
 - 1. Some say it refers to a literal rebuilding of the Temple during the Tribulation period. It will be destroyed by the Antichrist.
 - 2. Some say it figuratively refers to the church which is considered by many to be the "new temple of God"-Ephesians 2:19-22 & 2 Corinthians 6:16.
 - 3. Objections to the figurative view.
 - a. How can John measure a people rather than a building?
11:1a--I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar...
 - b. Why are Gentiles excluded since believing Gentiles are a part of the church—**11:2a-- But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles;** and Ephesians 2:11-16.
 - c. Where is the church during the events of Chapter 11? Most believe in heaven.
 - d. If the Temple is the Church then who are the worshippers in verse one—**11:1b--... count the worshipers there.**

4. For the sake of our discussion, I believe this passage refers to a literal rebuilding of the Jewish Temple during the Tribulation.
5. Let's notice three things about this Temple that John saw in 11:1-2.

I. FIRST, JOHN SAW THE PROMISE OF A NEW TEMPLE (V.1).

A. How many Temples have there been in Jerusalem?

1. For some 500 years, from Moses to David, the people worshipped God in the Tabernacle.
2. Solomon built the first Temple in Jerusalem, which took seven years to complete. It was completed about 960 (I Kings 6:37-38) It was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 B.C.
3. In 515 B.C. Zerubbabel led the returning exiles to rebuild it.
4. Herod the Great remodeled this Temple around 6-9 B.C. taking 46 years to do so. This is the Temple that existed in Jesus' day.
5. Jesus prophesied the destruction of this Temple in Matthew 24:1-2.
6. The Romans did, in fact, destroy the last Temple in 70 A.D.
7. Today, only a small retaining wall of the Temple mount, not the Temple itself, remains. Jews gather here believing their prayers will be answered from this location.

B. Why hasn't the Temple been rebuilt before now?

1. The Temple mound today is under the control of the Palestinians. They have built a mosque there called "Al Aqsa" and also a shrine called "The Dome of the Rock" built in 691 A.D. They believe it covers a large boulder from which Mohammed ascended into heaven then came back.
2. Many believe the Dome of the Rock is built over the original site of the Jewish Temple, which means it would have to be dismantled before the Temple could be built. This site, however is the third holiest place in Islam.

C. Preparations are now being made to rebuild the Temple as soon as it is allowed. One group dedicated to this, call themselves, "The Temple Institute" (www.templeinstitute.org).

II. SECOND, JOHN SAW GOD'S PRESERVATION OF HIS PEOPLE (V.1).

- A. What was John told to do? To measure the Temple with a rod. A rod is about six cubits or nine feet
- B. This measuring symbolizes two things.
 - 1. First, it symbolizes God's possession or preservation of His people.
 - a. Measuring is an act of claiming possession and also can mean preservation or protection of His people In this case it refers to the protection of God's people. This protection is similar to sealing the 144 thousand in chapter 7.
 - b. Zechariah echoes this practice of measuring this-Zechariah 1:16.

Zechariah 1:16 "Therefore, this is what the LORD says: 'I will return to Jerusalem with mercy, and there my house will be rebuilt. And the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem,' declares the LORD Almighty.

- 2. Second, it symbolizes the fulfillment of God's promises to the Jews.
 - a. Those who interpret the church as the "New Israel" believe any remaining promises made to Israel will be fulfilled through the church, not the Jews.
 - b. Paul, however, reminds us in Romans 11 that God is not finished with the Jews yet. He has always saved for himself a believing "remnant"—Rom. 11:1-2a, 5 and Zechariah 12:10-11a & 13:8-9.

Romans 11:1-2

I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew.....

Romans 11:5

So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.

Zechariah 12:10-11a

10 “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. 11 On that day the weeping in Jerusalem.....

Zechariah 13:8-9

8 In the whole land,” declares the Lord, “two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it. 9 This third I will put into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, ‘They are my people,’ and they will say, ‘The Lord is our God.’”

III. THIRD, JOHN SAW GOD’S PUNISHMENT ON UNBELIEVING ISRAEL (V.2).

A. Israel will face the most severe persecution ever during the last half of the tribulation—**11:2c--....They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.**

1. This time is symbolized as 42 months, 1,260 days as in verse 3 and “a time, times and half a time” as in 12:14. All mean 3 ½ years.
2. Jesus predicted this persecution in Matthew 24:16-22.

Matthew 24:16-22 ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. ¹⁸ Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. ¹⁹ How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! ²⁰ Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equaled again. ²² If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

- B. Why will Israel be severely persecuted during the Tribulation?
1. Because they rejected Jesus and his message.
 2. Because they will reject the message of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Rev. 7).