

# Introduction to Revelation Chapter 11

Revelation chapter 11 continues the prophetic narrative following the interlude of chapter 10 and moves the reader deeper into the unfolding drama of the last days. This chapter brings together several powerful themes: the preservation of God's people, the testimony of faithful witnesses, the conflict between the kingdom of God and the rebellion of the world, and the ultimate triumph of Christ's reign.

The chapter begins with John being instructed to measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. Measuring in prophetic literature often symbolizes God's ownership, protection, and evaluation. While the inner sanctuary is measured, the outer court is left to the nations, indicating a period of oppression and conflict that will last for forty-two months. This time frame reflects the limited duration of tribulation that God allows within His sovereign plan.

Central to the chapter is the appearance of the two witnesses, prophetic figures who proclaim God's truth during a time of widespread rebellion. They are described with imagery that connects them to Old Testament prophets such as Moses and Elijah, emphasizing their authority and divine empowerment. Their ministry confronts the world with God's message, yet it also provokes hostility. Eventually, they are killed by the beast rising from the abyss, and their deaths are celebrated by the rebellious world.

However, their defeat is only temporary. After three and a half days, God raises them to life and calls them to heaven in the sight of their enemies. This dramatic vindication demonstrates that God ultimately honors those who faithfully testify for Him. Their resurrection is followed by a great earthquake, reminding the world of God's power and judgment.

The chapter concludes with the sounding of the seventh trumpet. With this trumpet comes a declaration in heaven that "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." Worship erupts as the heavenly hosts celebrate the certainty of God's final victory. The temple of God in heaven is opened, revealing the ark of His covenant, a powerful symbol of God's faithfulness to His promises.

Revelation chapter 11 highlights the tension between persecution and victory, suffering and vindication. It reminds believers that faithful witness may bring opposition, but God ultimately preserves His truth and fulfills His kingdom purposes.

Heavenly Father,

As we come to Revelation chapter 11, give us hearts that are attentive to Your Word and faithful to Your truth. Help us understand the courage and endurance required to stand as witnesses for You in a world that often resists Your message.

Strengthen our faith so that we remain bold in proclaiming Christ, even when it is difficult. Remind us that Your kingdom is advancing and that every promise You have made will be fulfilled.

Fill us with confidence that You are sovereign over history and that the day is coming when the kingdoms of this world will belong to our Lord and His Christ.

In Jesus' name,  
Amen.

# 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, with its worshipers. (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.’”

## The Context:

John is no longer just watching; he is handed a tool. In the Bible, **measuring** something is a sign of **ownership and protection**. When a builder measures a plot of land, he is claiming it.

The scene moves to the Temple in Jerusalem. This is highly symbolic. While the world is being shaken by the trumpets, God is "measuring" His own people. He is drawing a line in the sand between what belongs to Him and what is left to the world.

## The Meaning of the "Measuring Rod" and the "Outer Court":

In simple American English, we might say, "God told John to mark out the people who truly worship Him so they would be protected, while letting the rest of the world experience the consequences of their choices for a set amount of time." John uses these symbols:

- **"Measure the Temple... and its Worshipers"**: This signifies **Spiritual Security**. God isn't measuring physical stones; He is measuring the "worshipers." He is taking an inventory of His children. Even if the world attacks the "building," the people inside—the true Church—are "measured" and safe in His hands.
- **"Exclude the Outer Court"**: This signifies **The "Religious" but Unbelieving**. In the ancient temple, the outer court was for anyone to walk in. It represents people who are "close" to God but haven't truly surrendered. God says, "Don't measure them." They aren't under His special protection in the same way.
- **"42 Months"**: This signifies **A Limited Time of Trial**. 42 months is the same as 3.5 years, or 1,260 days. In Revelation, this is the "broken seven"—it represents a period of intense suffering and persecution that is **strictly limited by God**. It won't go on a day longer than He allows.

## The Core Lesson:

**God knows exactly who belongs to Him.** When chaos hits a city, the first thing the authorities do is secure the "essentials." The measuring rod shows that **the Church is God's essential property**. You might feel "trampled" by the world's circumstances, but if you are a "measured worshiper," your soul is off-limits to the enemy. This teaches us that **our security isn't based on our strength, but on God's "measurement" of our lives.**

## The Illustration: The "Inspected" House

Imagine a massive hurricane is coming toward a town. The government sends an inspector to a specific house. He measures the foundation, checks the roof, and puts a "Certified Safe" seal on the door. He tells the family, "Stay inside the measured lines, and you will survive the storm."

Outside, the fence might blow away, and the "outer court" of the yard might be flooded and trampled by debris. But the house itself—the part that was measured—stands firm. Being "measured" by God means that even when the "city" is being trampled, your eternal life is secure.

## The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Measurement" Check:** If God were to measure my heart today, would He find a "worshiper" inside the temple, or am I just hanging out in the "outer court" of religion?
- **The "Trampled" Check:** When I feel like the world is "trampling" on my values or my peace, do I remember that God has put a "42-month" limit on the darkness?
- **The "Reed" Check:** Am I willing to let God "measure" every part of my life—my time, my money, and my relationships—to ensure they belong to Him?

**The Temple is measured. Now, the two most powerful characters in the book are about to step onto the stage.**

## Revelation 11:3–6

“(3) And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.’ (4) They are ‘the two olive trees’ and the two lampstands, and ‘they stand before the Lord of the earth.’ (5) If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. (6) They have power to shut up the heavens so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.”

## The Context:

After measuring the Temple, God introduces the **Two Witnesses**. They are the "anti-world" forces. While the world is running after idols, these two are running toward the Truth. They wear **sackcloth**, the ancient clothing of deep mourning and repentance.

They are described as "olive trees" and "lampstands." This is a direct reference to the prophet Zechariah, symbolizing that they are fueled by the Holy Spirit (the oil) and are light-bearers in a very dark time. They don't just speak; they have the power to enforce their message with supernatural signs.

## The Meaning of the "Fire," "Drought," and "Plagues":

In simple American English, we might say, "God sent two powerful messengers to hold the world accountable for its rebellion, and they came with the same 'authority' as Elijah and Moses." John uses these descriptions:

- **"Fire comes from their mouths":** This signifies **The Destructive Power of God's Word**. In the Bible, fire represents judgment. When they speak, it isn't just "talk"; it is an active force that protects them and judges those who try to silence them.
- **"Shut up the heavens... turn waters to blood":** This signifies **The Return of Old Testament Authority**. These powers are identical to the ones God gave **Elijah** (who stopped the rain) and **Moses** (who turned the Nile to blood). They represent the Law and the Prophets—the final call to the world to repent.
- **"1,260 days":** This is exactly 42 months, or 3.5 years. It is the time of the "Great Tribulation." They are on a strictly set clock—they cannot be killed until their "work" is finished.

## The Core Lesson:

**God never leaves Himself without a witness.** Even in the middle of a "trampled" city where everyone is worshipping idols, God has two people on the ground who refuse to compromise. This teaches us that **you can never be "too outnumbered" to do what is right.** These two men are standing against the entire world, and the world can't touch them until their work is done. It's a lesson on divine protection and bold faithfulness.

## The Illustration: The "Voice in the Noise"

Imagine a giant, crowded stadium where everyone is cheering for a corrupt, false leader. The music is deafening, and everyone is caught up in the "lie."

Suddenly, the music stops. Two people walk onto the field wearing rough, grey sackcloth. They don't have microphones, but when they speak, their voices are louder than the crowd. When someone tries to run onto the field to grab them, they are pushed back by an invisible force. These two aren't there to make friends; they are there to tell the truth while the world is busy ignoring it. They are the "troublemakers" that the world hates, but they are the only ones telling the truth.

## The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Lampstand" Check:** Am I a "light-bearer" (a lampstand) in my own sphere of influence, or have I blended into the crowd?
- **The "Sackcloth" Check:** Do I have the courage to stand for Truth, even if it makes me look "strange" or "out of style" compared to the world around me?

- **The "1,260 Days" Check:** These witnesses had a specific mission and a specific timeline. Do I trust that God has given me a specific purpose for *my* "time" on earth?

**The world will eventually get angry enough to try and silence them.**

## Revelation 11:7–10

“(7) When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them. (8) Their bodies will lie in the public square of the great city—which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt—where also their Lord was crucified. (9) For three and a half days some from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial. (10) The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will be filled with joy and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth.”

### The Context:

This is the moment of peak rebellion. The world has been listening to these two witnesses for 1,260 days. They’ve seen the plagues, felt the drought, and heard the warnings. But instead of repenting, they have grown to **hate** the Truth.

The "Beast" (the ultimate instrument of Satan) finally has permission to kill them. Notice the timing: **"When they have finished their testimony."** They aren't killed because they are weak or because the Beast is stronger; they are killed because their mission is officially complete.

### The Meaning of the "Great City," the "Public Square," and the "Celebration":

In simple American English, we might say, "The world tried to kill the 'conscience' that was bothering them, and when they succeeded, they acted like they had just won their freedom." John uses these symbols:

- **"The great city... Sodom and Egypt":** This signifies **Moral Decay and Oppression**. By calling it Sodom (the city of sin) and Egypt (the city of slavery), John is saying that the world has become a place where God’s people are treated as slaves and His laws are treated as a joke. It’s where "their Lord was crucified"—Jerusalem. This shows the tragic irony: the place meant to be the center of worship has become the center of rebellion.
- **"Three and a half days":** This signifies **A Mocking Interval**. The number 3.5 is the same length as the witnesses' ministry. The world thinks it has "reversed" God’s work by letting them lie in the street for the same amount of time they preached.
- **"Sending each other gifts":** This signifies **The "Celebration" of Sin**. Imagine a world so corrupt that they throw a "party" because the two people who were calling them to holiness are finally dead. It’s the ultimate sign of a society that has lost its moral compass.

## **The Core Lesson:**

**The world often celebrates the "Death of Truth."** Whenever a culture reaches a point where it is *happy* to silence the voice of God, it has reached the point of no return. But this death is temporary. The witnesses' bodies are only left in the street for three days—a clear "nod" to the **Resurrection of Jesus**. Just as the world thought they killed Jesus and won, they think they've killed these two and won. But they are about to be shocked.

## **The Illustration: The "Bully's" Relief**

Imagine a classroom where two students are standing up to a bully. They aren't just telling him to stop; they are reporting his behavior to the principal every single day. The bully hates them. Finally, the bully manages to get them expelled.

The rest of the class, who were afraid to speak up, starts cheering. They bring out cake, throw a party, and act like they are finally "free." They feel great because they don't have to listen to the "conviction" anymore. But they are living in a lie—the principal is still coming, and their "freedom" is about to turn into a nightmare. That is the world in these verses.

## **The "Glory" Reflection:**

- **The "Reaction" Check:** When I hear the truth that convicts me, is my first reaction to "celebrate" the death of that truth so I can feel better, or is it to repent?
- **The "Truth" Check:** Do I realize that "Truth" is not a "torment"—it is a life-line? Why does the world see God's warnings as "torment" rather than "mercy"?
- **The "Faith" Check:** If I were one of the two witnesses, would I be willing to finish my "testimony" even if I knew the world would celebrate my death?

**The world is throwing a party, but it is about to be interrupted in the most spectacular way possible.**

## **Revelation 11:11–12**

“(11) But after those three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and those who saw them were struck with great terror. (12) Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here!’ And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies watched them.”

## **The Context:**

The world just finished their "party." They were exchanging gifts, celebrating the silence, and feeling like they finally got rid of the "torment" of God's truth. They thought they had won.

But God has the final word. In a scene that perfectly mirrors the Resurrection of Jesus, He breathes life into the witnesses. The "terror" that strikes the crowd is not just fear of the supernatural; it is the realization that **they are on the wrong side of history.**

### **The Meaning of "Breath of Life" and "Come Up Here!":**

In simple American English, we might say, "God's life-giving power suddenly ended the party, and the very people who wanted them dead were forced to watch them be taken to the highest place of honor." John uses these descriptions:

- **"Breath of life from God":** This signifies **The Power of Creation.** Just as God breathed life into Adam (Genesis 2:7) and Jesus breathed life into His disciples (John 20:22), this "breath" shows that God is the only One who holds the keys to life and death. The Beast could kill the *body*, but God can resurrect it.
- **"Struck with great terror":** This signifies **The Reality Check.** For three days, they lived in a lie. Now, the truth is staring them in the face. It's the realization that their "freedom" from God was just a countdown to their own judgment.
- **"Come up here!":** This signifies **The Great Promotion.** They didn't just crawl away; they were invited to the Throne Room. It is a total reversal. The world saw them as trash in the street; God sees them as His honored guests.

### **The Core Lesson:**

**The "Final" word always belongs to God.** The world thinks it has power because it has weapons, laws, and the ability to silence voices. But Revelation 11 shows that even if the world "wins" for a moment, God is already planning the "reversal." This teaches us that **we don't need to be afraid of the world's "party" or their celebration of evil.** They are only celebrating until God says, "That's enough."

### **The Illustration: The "Late" Reality Show**

Imagine a reality TV show where the producers rig the game to make the "hero" look like a villain. They edit the clips, they hire people to boo him, and they try to get him kicked off the show. Finally, he is "voted off." The other contestants celebrate, they have a party, and they think they've ruined him.

Suddenly, the *real* owner of the network walks onto the set. He grabs the microphone, fires the producers, declares the hero the winner, and flies him out in a private jet to meet the audience. The contestants who were cheering are now standing in dead silence, realizing they just lost their jobs. That is the "terror" of the crowd in these verses.

## The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Resurrection" Check:** Do I live with the confidence that God can "breathe life" into any dead situation—whether it's my marriage, my job, or my hopes?
- **The "Reversal" Check:** Am I worried about being "voted off" by the world, or do I trust that God's "promotion" is the only one that actually matters?
- **The "Watch" Check:** The enemies were forced to watch the witnesses rise. Do I live in a way that shows I serve a God who is alive, even when the world thinks He's "dead"?

The witnesses are in heaven. Now, the Seventh Trumpet sounds.

## Revelation 11:13–14

“(13) At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. (14) The second woe has passed; the third woe is coming quickly.”

### The Context:

The "party" is officially over. The resurrection of the two witnesses was a shock, but the earthquake that follows is a **sobering reality**. John describes a city—likely the same place where the witnesses were killed—being torn apart by the earth itself.

In the Bible, earthquakes are often signs of God's direct presence or His judgment (like at Mount Sinai or the crucifixion of Jesus). Here, it serves a dual purpose: it dismantles the "city" that rejected God, and it forces the survivors to finally look up.

### The Meaning of "Gave Glory to the God of Heaven":

In simple American English, we might say, "The survivors were so shaken by the power of God that they finally stopped ignoring Him and admitted that He is the only One who holds their lives in His hands." John highlights the result of this:

- **"A Tenth of the City Collapsed":** This signifies **A Partial Judgment**. Unlike the total destruction of the world, this is a "warning shot." It shows that God is still trying to get the city's attention before the "Third Woe" arrives.
- **"Gave Glory to the God of Heaven":** This is the first time in the entire book that we see people *finally* responding to God properly. In Chapter 9, they refused to repent. Here, the "terror" leads to an admission of God's sovereignty. It is the beginning of humility.
- **"The Second Woe has passed; the third is coming quickly":** This signifies **The Acceleration of the End**. God isn't drawing this out forever. The final "Woe"—which will lead to the Seventh Trumpet and the climax of the book—is arriving rapidly.

## **The Core Lesson:**

**God uses "Shaking" to bring us to our knees.** Sometimes, we are so comfortable in our "city" (our routines, our wealth, our idols) that we don't notice God until He shakes the ground beneath our feet. This isn't because God is cruel; it's because He loves us enough to "break" our false sense of security before it breaks us forever. This teaches us that **the most important "glory" we can give is the one we give when we realize we aren't in control.**

## **The Illustration: The Wake-Up Call**

Imagine a passenger on a luxury cruise ship. He is having a great time, drinking, eating, and ignoring the warnings that the ship is heading toward a reef. He thinks the ship is "unsinkable."

Suddenly, the ship hits a rock. The alarms go off, the walls crack, and he is thrown out of his chair. He isn't enjoying himself anymore; he is terrified. He realizes, "This ship isn't safe, and I need help." He finally looks for the Captain. The "earthquake" in Revelation 11 is that moment of impact. It's not the end of the journey, but it is the end of his "luxury delusion."

## **The "Glory" Reflection:**

- **The "Shaking" Check:** Has God ever had to "shake" my world to get my attention? How did I respond when I realized I wasn't the one running the show?
- **The "Glory" Check:** Do I give glory to God only when things are perfect, or do I give Him glory even when the "walls" are shaking?
- **The "Third Woe" Check:** If the final chapter is coming "quickly," am I living in a way that reflects that I am prepared for the King's return?

**The "Second Woe" is gone. We are now at the threshold of the final, triumphant trumpet.**

## **Revelation 11:15–17**

“(15) The seventh angel blew his trumpet. Then there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever.’ (16) And the twenty-four elders who sat on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshipped God, (17) saying: ‘We give you thanks, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.’”

## **The Context:**

This is the **grand finale of the trumpets**. The first six were warnings, judgments, and calls to wake up. The Seventh Trumpet is the **Coronation**.

When this trumpet sounds, the "mystery of God" is finished. The voices in heaven don't mourn or tremble; they celebrate. They realize that the long, painful era of human rebellion is over, and the era of the King has officially begun.

## **The Meaning of "The Kingdom of the World" and "The Great Power":**

In simple American English, we might say, "The keys to the planet have been returned to their rightful Owner, and the King is sitting on His throne." John uses two key declarations:

- **"The Kingdom of the World has become the Kingdom of our Lord":** This signifies **A Total Transfer of Power**. For centuries, the world was ruled by human ego, demonic influence, and greed (the "Kingdom of the World"). Now, the "hostile takeover" is complete—God has legally and effectively taken the planet back.
- **"You have taken your great power and have begun to reign":** This signifies **The End of God's Restraint**. People often ask, "Why doesn't God just stop the evil?" The answer is that He *was* allowing time for the "full number" of people to come to Him. Now, the time for "allowing" is over. He has put on His royal robes, and His reign is now visible for all to see.

## **The Core Lesson:**

**History is not a circle; it is a straight line toward a Throne.** The world feels chaotic, but it is moving toward a fixed destination: the moment when Christ is recognized as King. This teaches us that **no matter who is in charge of a nation today, the final election has already been won.** The "Kingdom of the World" is temporary, but the "Kingdom of the Messiah" is eternal.

## **The Illustration: The Displaced Owner**

Imagine a man who owns a massive estate, but he decides to lease it out to a group of tenants. These tenants proceed to ruin the house, destroy the garden, and throw loud, destructive parties. The owner stays away, letting the lease run its course, even though he watches his property being trashed.

One day, the lease expires. The owner walks onto the property, looks at the tenants, and says, "The lease is over. I am home." He takes the keys, shuts down the party, and starts the renovation. The Seventh Trumpet is the moment the Owner walks back onto the property of Earth.

## **The "Glory" Reflection:**

- **The "Reign" Check:** Do I live like Jesus is currently my King, or am I still acting like a "tenant" who thinks he owns the house?
- **The "Transfer" Check:** Is there any area of my life that I am still trying to "rule" myself, rather than surrendering it to the Kingdom of the Messiah?
- **The "Thanks" Check:** The Elders fall on their faces to give "thanks." Do I thank God that He is a King who will finally stop the violence and the pain of this world?

**The King has taken His throne, but there is one final detail to the Seventh Trumpet.**

## **Revelation 11:18–19**

“(18) The nations were angry, and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your people who revere your name, both great and small—and for destroying those who destroy the earth.’ (19) Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.”

### **The Context:**

The Seventh Trumpet concludes with a massive "read-out" of God’s final plans. It’s a moment of cosmic justice. While the world was busy being "angry" and trying to destroy the planet, God was busy preparing the courtroom.

John sees something incredible: **The Ark of the Covenant**. In the Old Testament, the Ark was the most sacred object in the world—it represented God’s presence, His promise, and His throne. Seeing it "open" in heaven means that the secret is finally out: God is faithful to His promises, and the time for His final judgment has arrived.

### **The Meaning of the "Ark" and the "Destroyers":**

In simple American English, we might say, "The promise-keeping God has opened His heavenly throne room, and the people who tried to ruin His creation are about to be held accountable." John uses these symbols:

- **"The Nations were angry":** This signifies **The Rejection of the King**. Even as God’s Kingdom is established, the world’s reaction isn’t relief—it’s rage. They prefer their own chaos to God’s order.
- **"Rewarding your servants... and destroying those who destroy the earth":** This signifies **The Great Reversal**. The "great and small" who followed God (even if the world ignored them) are finally vindicated. Meanwhile, those who treated the earth as their playground—ruining lives and ignoring the Creator—are finished.
- **"The Ark of the Covenant":** This signifies **God’s Unbroken Promise**. The Ark was a box that held the Ten Commandments—the evidence of God’s covenant with His people. By showing it in heaven, God is declaring, "I kept my word. I didn't forget you, and I didn't forget my promise to fix everything."

## **The Core Lesson:**

**Justice is not just "revenge"; it is "setting things right."** We often think of judgment as a negative thing, but to a victim of evil, judgment is the only way for justice to happen. God's wrath is the "other side" of His love; if He didn't care about the people being destroyed, He wouldn't judge the "destroyers." This teaches us that **when God finally acts, He is protecting the people He loves.**

## **The Illustration: The Courtroom Verdict**

Imagine a town where a corrupt corporation has been poisoning the water, stealing land, and hurting families for years. The townspeople are angry, but they are powerless. They keep looking to the judge, asking, "When will you stop them?"

One day, the judge walks out of his chambers, opens the heavy courtroom doors, and carries the "Law of the Land" (the Ark) out to the front steps. He declares, "The corporation is dissolved, the victims are restored, and the destroyers are finished." The Seventh Trumpet is the Judge walking out with the Law, ending the poisoning once and for all.

## **The "Glory" Reflection:**

- **The "Destroyer" Check:** Is there anything in my life that is "destroying the earth"—my relationships, my health, or my witness—that needs to be surrendered to the Judge?
- **The "Covenant" Check:** Do I trust that God is a "covenant-keeping" God who is faithful to the promises He made to me?
- **The "Expectation" Check:** Do the "lightning and thunder" of God's presence frighten me, or do they remind me that the rightful King is finally taking charge of His world?

**We have finished the "Trumpet" section of Revelation.** This is a major turning point! The world has been warned, the witnesses have been called, and the Kingdom has been announced.

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the powerful reminder in this chapter that Your kingdom will ultimately triumph over every power of this world. Strengthen us to be faithful witnesses, standing firm in truth even when we face opposition.

Help us trust that You see every act of obedience and that You will vindicate Your servants in Your perfect time. Fill our hearts with hope as we remember that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

Keep us steadfast, courageous, and devoted to Your purposes until the day when Your reign is fully revealed.

In Jesus' name,  
Amen.

