

THE SEVEN-FOLD VISIONS

(6:1 – 16:21)

FIRST VISION

SCENE 1-5 – Seals 1-5 (6:1-11)

SCENE 6 – Sixth Seal (6:12-17)
(End of this World) (NO Battle Scene)

The Interlude: Comfort and
and Protection of the Church (7:1-17)

SCENE 7 – Seventh Seal (8:1-5)
(Introduces the Second Vision)

SECOND VISION

SCENE 1-5 – Trumpets 1-5 (8:6 – 9:12)
Scene 5 (Fifth Trumpet-Angel)

SCENE 6 – Sixth Trumpet (9:13-21)
(The Great Battle)

The Interlude: The Church in Mission and
God's Protection (10:1-11:14)

SCENE 7 – Seventh Trumpet (11:15-19)
(End of this World)

The Interregnum
(Chapters 12-14)

THIRD VISION

SCENE 1-5 – Bowls 1-5 (15:1 – 16:11)

SCENE 6 – Sixth Bowl (16:12-16)
(The Battle of Armageddon)

SCENE 7 – Seventh Bowl (16:17-21)
(End of this World)

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 11:1-14 continues the vision of Chapter 10, and John's active participation continues. This text describes the visible church on earth and the measurement of that church, i.e., who is Christian and who is not.

In fact, Chapter 11 seems to portray a situation in which the saved, Bible-believing Christians are a minority within the church.

OUTLINE OF THE SECOND EARTHLY VISION

~~I. The Mighty Angel from Heaven (10:1-11)~~

~~A. Commissioning of John~~

~~1. Proclamation of the Prophetic
Message~~

II. Temple Measured/Two Witnesses (11:1-14).

A. Proclamation of the Message

MEASURING THE TEMPLE

V.1 -- *“measuring rod”* – John is given a measuring rod or cane by which he is to *“measure the temple of God and the altar...”* We see the same language in Ezek 40-42 and Zech 2:1-5. In these two prophecies, Jerusalem was to be measured, symbolizing the promise that God would protect the city and that He also would be its glory. Thus, the instruction to John to use a measuring rod is in accord with the prophetic tradition. His measuring of the temple of God are God’s holy people. His holy dwelling, will be protected as they carry out the mission given to them – the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. By the way, the Greek word for measuring is: *μετρέω*, from which we get the word meter.

MEASURING THE TEMPLE

V.2: -- “...exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles.” In the rebuilt temple of Herod there were two courts. The inner court was divided into three sections: priest’s courtyard; Israelite’s courtyard; and the women’s courtyard. The outer court was for Gentiles. The inner and outer court was separated by a barrier, which was inscribed with a dire warning (cf. Eph 2:11-18).

John is told not to measure the outer court. It will NOT be protected by God, since the pagan nations will turn against it as a place of prayer and worship and attempt to destroy the temple of God (The Church).

MEASURING THE TEMPLE

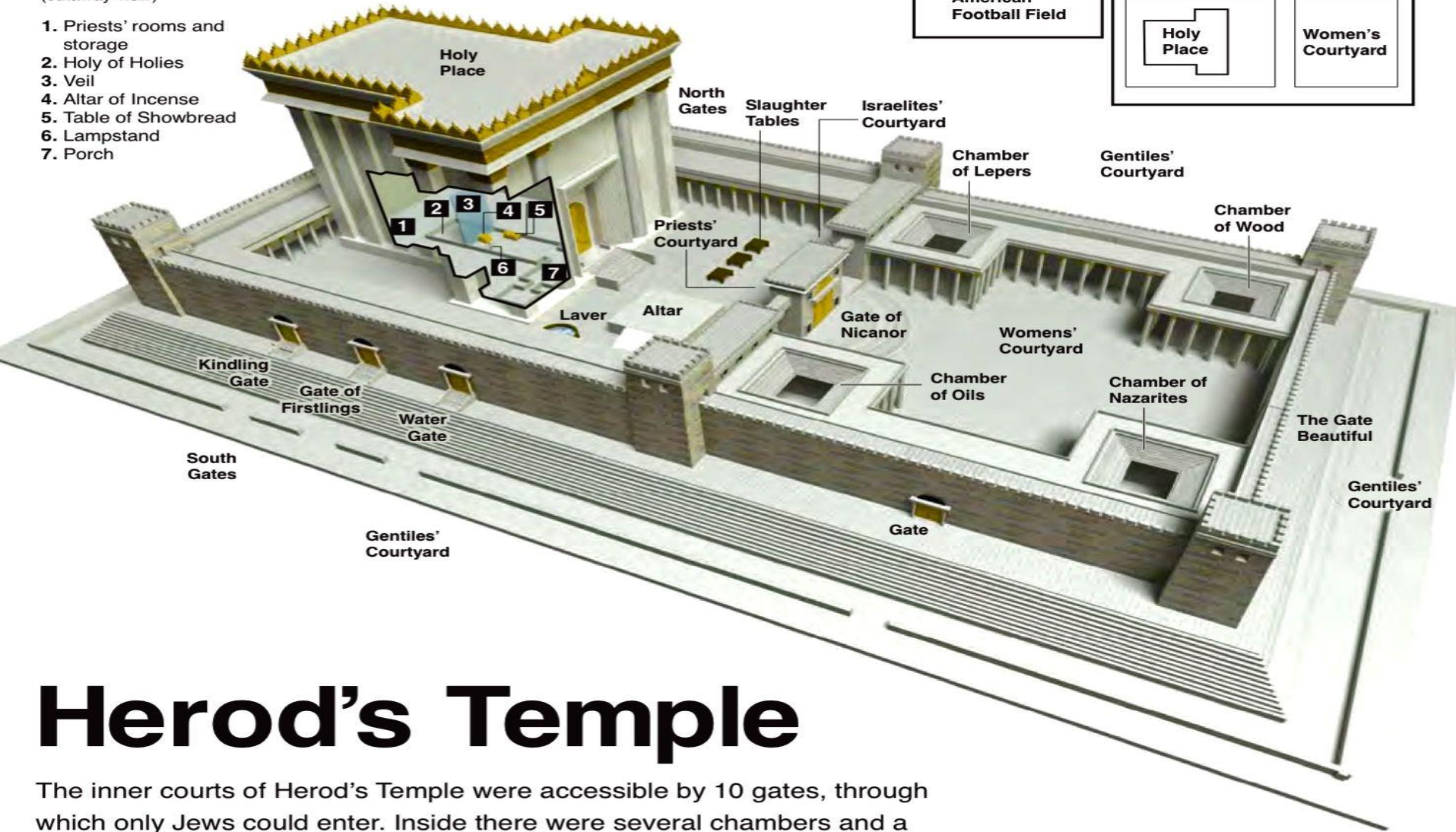
V.1 -- The altar, actually the “incense altar” represents the prayers of God’s saints ascending to His holy presence (cf. 5:8; 6:9-11; 8:3, 4). The worship life of God’s people in prayer and praise is a part of their mission on earth, and it will also be protected and maintained.



INSIDE THE HOLY PLACE

(cutaway view)

1. Priests' rooms and storage
2. Holy of Holies
3. Veil
4. Altar of Incense
5. Table of Showbread
6. Lampstand
7. Porch



Herod's Temple

The inner courts of Herod's Temple were accessible by 10 gates, through which only Jews could enter. Inside there were several chambers and a courtyard where sacrifices were made. At one end was the holy place—a two-room sanctuary used by Jewish priests. The expansive building project of Herod's Second Temple and Temple Mount was completed in approximately AD 62–64, only to be destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.



TRANSLATION
"NO FOREIGNER MAY ENTER
WITHIN THE BALUSTRADE
AROUND THE SANCTUARY
AND THE ENCLOSURE.
WHOEVER IS CAUGHT, ON
HIMSELF SHALL HE PUT
BLAME FOR THE DEATH
WHICH WILL ENSUE."



**The Soreg (a low,
latticed railing)
prohibited Gentiles or
"unclean" Jews from
entering the Temple
courts.**

MEASURING THE TEMPLE

V.2: -- *“They will trample on the holy city...”* This is to say, the Church of Jesus Christ, the people of God, will be under severe attack. Though the Church will be protected by God so that she can carry out her mission, persecution will occur (cf. 1 Peter 4).

The Holy City represents God dwelling with His people. Today, and up to His Second Advent, Jesus dwells with His Holy Bride, the Church incarnationally among and in His saints.

MEASURING THE TEMPLE

V.2: -- “42 months” (1,260 days) (42 x 30 = 1,260). This is equal to 3 1/2 years. We’ll also hear “a time, times, and a half” in Revelation 12:14. Daniel speaks of similar events with the same language (Daniel 7:25, 12:7). But what is this period of time?

Millennialists will usually take the Revelation 1,260 days as literal and the Daniel 1,260 days as figurative -- each day representing a year, for a total of 1,260 years, which they call “the church age.”

MEASURING THE TEMPLE

V.2: -- “42 months” (1260 days) ($42 \times 30 = 1,260$). This is equal to 3 1/2 years. We’ll also hear “*a time, times, and a half*” in Revelation 12:14. Daniel speaks of similar events with the same language (Daniel 7:25, 12:7). But what is this period of time?

Non-millennialists usually take the 1,260 days as referring to a limited set period of time in which the church would be an influence in the world. This seems to fit best both with the flow of action and the intent of Scripture. Otherwise, we get preoccupied with date setting, which isn’t God’s point. His point: *During the church age (when the Gospel spreads and the church grows) the unbelievers and false Christians will continue to “trample on the holy city.”*

THE TWO WITNESSES

V.3: -- “*two witnesses*” -- So who are, or rather, what are the two witnesses? First of all, notice that they belong to God. He says, “...*my two witnesses.*” They represent the two-fold ministry of the Word, which we know as Law and Gospel. There’s no reason to speculate about specific people (though the model of Law and Gospel is found in Moses and Elijah), since this doesn’t fit the context. Remember, we are dealing with spiritual language from a God, Who is Spirit.

They are “*clothed in sackcloth,*” which represents that the ministry is to be conducted in a penitential attitude of humble and sacrificial service.

THE TWO WITNESSES

V.4: -- *“These are the two olive trees and two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.”* -- They stand before the Lord of the earth, the Creator, serving Him in making their witness of salvation by grace; they are also protected by the Lord of the universe. Olive trees and lampstands are symbols of beauty and peace. In addition, both olive oil and lampstands were used in worship. Thus the two witnesses are symbolized by the two lampstands because they represent the church in her royal, priestly, prophetic witness to the Gospel message of Christ. They are also symbolized by the two olive trees because God, through His anointed prophets and ministers, edifies and nourishes the church as she witnesses to the world.

THE TWO WITNESSES

V.6: -- “...shut up the sky so that it will not rain...”

“...power to turn the waters into blood...” “...strike the earth with every kind of plague...” – Withholding of rain and dew...Elijah (1 Kings 17:1) since, as Jesus said (Luke 4:24-25), the people did not heed his preaching and repent.

Turning the waters into blood...Moses, because Pharaoh refused to listen to God’s Word. The point is that God’s people are not helpless or powerless. Those who become our enemies on account of God’s Word, also become God’s enemies.

THE TWO WITNESSES

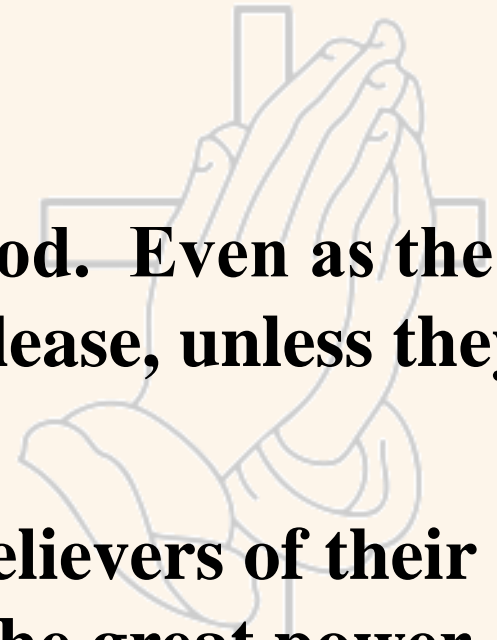
V.6: -- *“...shut up the sky so that it will not rain...”*

“...power to turn the waters into blood...” “...strike the earth with every kind of plague...”

Where does this power come from?

Prayer! Prayer...our “power line” to God. Even as the wicked think that they can do as they please, unless they repent, vengeance will strike them.

Even so, the devil will try to convince believers of their powerlessness so that they will not use the great power God has given to them...prayer!



THE TWO WITNESSES KILLED

V.7: -- *“Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them.”* These two witnesses will finish their testimony and be killed. So, in accordance with God’s time, the Gospel message will cease and the full fury of Satan will be unleashed to deceive and destroy the witness of the church.



THE TWO WITNESSES KILLED

Vv.8-10: -- *“Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. ⁹For three and a half days men from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial. ¹⁰The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth.”* **The death of the mission of the church will be like that of her Lord. The “body” or mission of the church will be unburied and on display for all to see. There will bring great depravity to the earth as the result of her death.**

THE TWO WITNESSES KILLED

Vv.8-10: -- *“Sodom and Egypt...”* – This must be understood spiritually and notice that the depravity of great evil is likened to the place of Christ’s death – Golgotha.

Therefore, when the inhabitants of any place reject the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that place become like apostate Jerusalem..., like Sodom and Egypt. To reject the witness of the church is to come into a depraved and idolatrous state (like Sodom), resulting in spiritual slavery (Egypt) and eventually death (Jerusalem, 70 A.D.).

THE TWO WITNESSES KILLED

9”For three and a half days men 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 celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth.” – Remember, symbolic language, with a spiritual undertone, which suggests the ongoing shame and ridicule that the unbelieving world heaps on the testimony of the church, especially in her demise, and particularly on her martyrs.

THE TWO WITNESSES KILLED

Their gloating will last for *“three and a half days.”* The number of days can be compared to the number of years of their prophetic ministry: 1,260 days/42 months. This again, is symbolic and, as we have suggested, this is the appointed time period by God in which His Gospel, the mission of the Church, is to be proclaimed. The unbelieving world has so much hatred for the proclamation of the Gospel that when it seems that they are finally rid of it (and the Church), they celebrate in an almost “anti-Christmas” way.

THE TWO WITNESSES MADE ALIVE!

Vv.11-12: -- *“But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them. ¹²Then 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 looked on.”* – **The joyful celebration of the Church’s demise is short-lived; after the three and a half days She come back to life! The resurrection of the Church, all true children of God, at the End is the final and great resurrection.**

THE TWO WITNESSES MADE ALIVE!

Vv.11-12: -- *“But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them. ¹²Then 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 looked on.”* – Being made alive by the Spirit of God refers to

the Church being raised up, after a time of persecution. Therefore, throughout the prophetic period from Christ’s Ascension to His Second Advent, the Church will be continually persecuted, killed, and the pagan world will celebrate, but God will breathe life into His Church so that she may continue her mission, which, again, brings terror to the wicked; and the cycle continues until His return!

THE TWO WITNESSES MADE ALIVE!

Verse 12 is a description of the Church at the End. Her prophetic work/message has been completed; their apparent end on earth was a humiliating death (like Christ); without a burial. But, in reality, she will be called to ascend into heaven to be in the presence of God forever. Thus the mission of the Church comes to the same conclusion as her Lord's...

Death

Resurrection

and

Ascension into Glory!

THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE

V.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.”* In

Revelation, an earthquake is mentioned seven times. As we have discussed, an earthquake is symbolic for the judgment and majesty of God that strikes the wicked because of the way that they have treated His children. This shaking of the earth can be seen as geophysical, but can also be taken that the pagan political, economic and sociological systems are shaken to the ground.

THE FOLLY OF RESISTING THE GOSPEL

For example, the political systems of Rome, Nazi Germany, and the Soviet Union (just to name a few) silenced, or attempted to silence the witness of the church, but their political, economic, and sociological systems were destroyed and the witness of the church was “resurrected” to again proclaim the Gospel!!!

1 Peter 1:25 - “...but the word of the Lord remains forever.”

THE TWO WITNESSES MADE ALIVE!

Verse 14 is a bridge between 9:13-21 and 11:15-19, and thus introduces the scene of the seventh trumpet-angel...the Third Woe.

The Third Woe will also conclude the second vision or the Seven trumpet-angels, which began in chapter 9 and in which we will discuss next week!