

Pursuing Resilience in Revelation

The Power to Witness

Revelation 11:1-14

Discover

I. The true temple of God (1-2)

- A. I believe that what we are seeing here is the same temple Ezekiel saw in Ezekiel 40:17-20. It is also the same temple which Eden was supposed to be, which Christ is building, which Peter declares in 1 Peter 2, which is described throughout Revelation, and which is also called the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21-22. This is none other than the church which is the living temple which Christ is building for himself.
- B. The temple is described as having both an inner and an outer court. The inner court is the place where the holy people of God meet God and only they are allowed there. In the natural temple, the outer court was a place where the nations could come and worship God, but in this case it is different. It is given over to them to trample it.
 - 1. The inner court here is a real place in a sense, but likely also symbolizes the inner, spiritual protection of the Lord over His people. He seals us and keeps us sealed for the day of salvation ahead.
 - 2. The outer court likely symbolizes our visible bodies where persecution occurs. They may trample our outer courts, but Christ will keep our souls secure in Him.
 - a) The outer court is trampled for approximately 3.5 years.

II. God's two witnesses (3-4)

- A. These two witnesses appear to come out of God's temple and they are given authority to represent Christ to the world.
 - 1. They minister for approximately 3.5 years, speaking forth God's word in the world.
 - 2. They are dressed in sackcloths which symbolizes repentance from sin and grief.
 - 3. The Lord gives us two strong hints as to their identity.
 - a) They are two olive trees. Olive trees are a source of olive oil, which symbolizes the anointing ministry of the Holy Spirit.

b) They are two lampstands standing before the Lord which is the exact language John used earlier to describe the churches of Jesus.

(1) From these things we can safely assume that these two witnesses are the church. They are the light which Jesus set on a hill and their flame is oiled with the Holy Spirit.

III. The ministry of God's two witnesses (3-6)

- A. They are given authority to speak the truth of Christ to the world.
- B. They are given supernatural power over nature.

IV. The persecution of God's two witnesses (7-8)

- A. While the beast is always resisting the church and has killed many saints over the years, there seems to be a time of intense persecution at the end of the current age right before Jesus returns.
- B. It is likely that every great city in the world will see many saints who are witnessing about Jesus killed during this time.
 - 1. Dr. Sam Storms comments that it may seem as if the entire church has been eradicated when this happens.

V. The gloating of God's enemies (9-10)

- A. The enemies of God will gloat over the destruction of the church for 3.5 days.
 - 1. Their bodies are left to the birds of the air which is a sign of disrespect.
- B. Wicked people will party, rejoice, and send presents to one another like it's Christmas because they will think they finally eliminated the voice of God from the Earth. They will think that they finally have the world for themselves.

VI. The victory of God's people (11-13)

- A. After a short time the events Jesus describes in John 5 will happen. His saints will rise from the dead and the people of this world who gloated over them will have their sick joy turned into sheer terror.

Nurture

Who is God? He is the Lord who has redeemed us through Christ, is restoring us by the Holy Spirit, and is empowering us for ministry to be His witnesses in the world.

What has God done? He has sent His church out as His witnesses in the world.

Who are we? We are His church, called to witness to His truth and to demonstrate the reality of His kingdom in our world.

What is God calling us to do? He is calling us to be bold before people and not to fear their wrath because they will only have power for a short time. We will be forever victorious in Christ.

Act

How can you better orient your heart, mind, and life to be ready for witnessing Christ to those around you?