



YES, NO AND MAYBE

1. For my funeral I want an open casket, and for everyone to see me in it.
2. My neighbors respect my privacy and my property line.
3. In the last days, God will give his people the power to bring plagues upon the earth.
4. God's protection in the last days will keep us safe from Satan's wrath.
5. Some of the objects that we've lost on the earth, God has saved and brought to heaven.

THE TWO WITNESSES & THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

➤ READ Revelation 11 (NIV)

The Two Witnesses

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. 3 And I will appoint 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 to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

7 Now 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 celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth.

11 But after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them. 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 looked on.

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 soon.

The Seventh Trumpet

15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said:

"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 were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying:

"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. 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.

« Which of these visual elements are confusing to you?

» Vs. 1: "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshipers." - The measuring rod was a lightweight

DIG DEEPER



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NOTES

DIG DEEPER...CONTINUED

reed (kalamos), grown along the Jordan River (1 Kings 14:15; Ezek. 29:6-7; 40:3; 41:8; 42:16-19; Matt. 11:7; Mark 6:8). To measure something means to claim it for yourself. The Lord was saying through John, "I own this city and this temple, and I claim both for Myself!" The Old Testament background is found in Ezekiel 40-41 and Zechariah 2:1-3. The meaning, then, is that the faithful who are persecuted physically, economically, and socially will be protected from spiritual harm, but that the unfaithful who prosper now will suffer ultimate destruction.

« How does understanding this "measuring" help you through your life's trials?

» **Vs. 2: Exclude the outer court** - In the Jerusalem Temple this court, outside the inner sanctuary, was known as the court of the Gentiles, for that is where they could assemble. They could get no nearer the inner sanctuary, however. In this passage this court and its people stand for the unbelievers, who will not be spared the disasters to come. The verb trample implies that the Gentiles will walk all over Jerusalem, the Holy City, as haughty conquerors of a defeated city

« Why do you think God allows people to be disrespectful to Him without immediate response?

» **Vs. 2,3,9,11: 42 Months, 1260 Days, 3.5 Days, & 3.5 Years** - The period of time, forty-two months (also 13:5-7), is equal to 1,260 days (verse 3; see verse 12:6) and is equal also to three and a half years, the conventional period in apocalyptic literature for the temporary triumph of evil before the end of the age (see 12:14; also Dan 7:25; 12:7; see also the similar "three days and a half," verse 11:9). Its meaning is that these outsiders will "dominate" or "rule over," not that they will walk around for forty-two months, trampling on everything. The reason for the numerical designation of three and half years may relate to the interruption of persecution in midstream, half the completion of seven; the forty-two months may be perfection missing the mark, six times seven. Whatever lies behind the symbolic numbers, the meaning of the passage is clear: Satan's tribulation of the faithful is limited and will soon come to an end.

« What do these time measurements mean to you, and what do they tell you about God?

» **Vs. 3: Two witnesses** - The choice of two witnesses probably has roots in the idea that the agreement of at least two persons was necessary for a testimony to be valid in a court of law (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:16; John 8:17) and that Jesus sent his disciples in pairs to bear witness to the gospel (Mark 6:7; Luke 10:1; Acts 13:2; 15:39-40).

• **Vs. 8: Their bodies will lie in the public square** - In the Hebrew tradition, unburied bodies were a degradation and their lying in the street a humiliation

« What do these "two witnesses" mean to you?

» **Vs. 18: Your wrath has come** - There are two Greek words for anger: thumos, which means "rage, passionate anger," and orge, used here, which means "indignation, a settled attitude of wrath." God's anger is not an outburst of temper; it is holy indignation against sin. Both of these Greek words are used in Revelation to describe God's anger: orge is used only four times; thumos, seven (Rev. 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19; 19:15). God's anger is not dispassionate, for He hates sin and loves righteousness and justice; but neither is it temperamental and unpredictable.

« How is God's wrath different from mankind's?

» **Vs. 18: Destroying those who destroy the earth** - This refers to the rebellious earth-dwellers who will not submit to God. How ironic that these people live for the earth and its pleasures, yet at the same time are destroying the very earth that they worship!

« Do you think God is talking about physical or spiritual destruction of the earth--or both?

» **Vs. 19: Within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant** - This chapter opened with a temple on earth, but now we see the temple in heaven. The focus of attention is on the ark of God, the symbol of God's presence with His people.

In the Old Testament tabernacle and temple, the ark stood behind the veil, in the holy of holies. God's glory rested on the ark, and God's Law was within the ark, beautifully illustrating that the two must never be separated. He is the faithful God who keeps His promises to His people. This vision of the ark would greatly encourage God's suffering people to whom John sent this book. "God will fulfill His promises!" John was saying to them. "He will reveal His glory! Trust Him!"

« Why do you think God showed us the ark of his covenant at this part of Revelation?

MY PRAYER...

1. What does it mean to me that God includes me in His measurements?
2. How do I understand God's kind of wrath?
3. What new aspect of God's character does He want me to know?



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