

Revelation 11:

Below is the outline of the chapter (I am indebted to the Outline Bible for this Outline):

- I. Verses 1-2: Measure the temple
 - a. (verse 2 leave out the outer court which has been given to the gentiles). This is likely the tribulation temple.
 - b. Verse 2, the gentiles will trample the holy city for 42 months.
- II. Verses 3-14: The two witnesses
 - a. Verse 3: they will prophesy for 1260 days
 - b. Verse 4: they function as God's two olive trees and lamp stands.
 - c. Verses 5-6: devastation caused by their ministry.
 - i. Verse 5: they devour their enemies by supernatural fire.
 - ii. Verse 6a: They cause a three and a half year drought.
 - iii. Verse 6b: they turn waters into blood.
 - iv. Verse 6c: they strike the earth with plagues.
 - d. Verses 7-10: martyrdom of the 2 witnesses.
 - i. The beast coming out of the abyss makes war... (verse 7a the antichrist???)
 - ii. He comes out of the bottomless pit (verse 7b)
 - iii. Their bodies cannot be buried (verse 9b)
 - iv. Verse 8: they lie in the streets of Jerusalem.
 - v. Verse 10: the world rejoices in their deaths.
 - e. Verses 11-14: Metamorphosis of the two witnesses
 - i. Verses 11-12 they are raptured up into Heaven.
 - ii. Verses 13-14: an earthquake destroys 10% of Jerusalem, leaving 7000 dead.
- III. Verses 15-19: The Trumpet of God
 - a. **The testimony of heaven (11:15–18): All heaven praises and worships God at the sounding of the seventh trumpet.**
 - i. *For his universal reign* (11:15–16)
 - ii. *Thanking him for his great power* (11:17)
 - iii. *For his righteous judgments* (11:18)
 - iv. In rewarding the saints (11:18b)
 - v. In punishing sinners (11:18a, c)
 - b. **The Temple in heaven (11:19): John sees the Temple and the Ark of the covenant.**¹

Verse by verse study:

- I. Verses 1-2: Measure the temple

Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it."² Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months.

¹ H. L. Willmington, [*The Outline Bible*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), Re 11:15–19.

- a. Remember the bitter-sweet message from Revelation 10:10-11, now we see the motif of spiritual protection interwoven with the darker thread of suffering.
- b. *John's first prophetic assignment after receiving his fresh commission was to provide this information.*²
- c. The "temple" (Gr. *naos*, inner temple) refers to both the holy place and the holy of holies excluding the courtyards. This is evidently the temple that the Jews will build in Jerusalem before or during the first half (three and a half years) of Daniel's seventieth week (i.e., the Tribulation; cf. v. 8; 13:14–15; Dan. 9:26–27; 12:11; Matt. 24:15–16; 2 Thess. 2:4).³⁵⁵ The "altar" probably refers to the brazen altar of sacrifice outside the sanctuary to which non-priests will have access. John was to measure (in the sense of quantifying) the worshippers too. This probably means that God will know or perhaps preserve them. These worshipers evidently represent godly Jews who will worship God in this Tribulation temple (cf. Ezek. 14:22; Rom. 11:4–5, 26). When Jesus Christ returns at the Second Coming He will build a new millennial temple that will replace this Tribulation temple (Ezek. 40).

Some interpreters who favor a more symbolic understanding of this verse take the temple as a reference to the church (cf. 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21; 1 Pet. 3:5).³⁵⁶³

- d. Many dispensationalists [dispensationalists believe that God acts in different dispensations of His grace throughout time. They believe in a literal tribulation period followed by a literal millennial reign, etc] believe this to imply the great tribulation. They believe during that time the Jewish temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem and Jewish worship will be reinstated. By this belief it is here that is the middle of the tribulation period, the antichrist will take seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thess 2:4). They understand the reference to the holy city to be literal, earthly, Jerusalem. **Others** see the temple in Rev 11 as a symbol of believers. In the OT Ezekiel in his vision watched an angel measure the temple (Ezek 40:2-3), but John must measure not only the sanctuary and its alter but also those who worship there. This measuring of persons shows both God's protection and his ownership and suggests that the temple itself symbolizes the

² Tom Constable, [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 11:1.

³⁵⁵ 355. See John F. Walvoord, "Will Israel Build a Temple in Jerusalem?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 125:498 (April-June 1968):99-106; Thomas S. McCall, "How Soon the Tribulation Temple?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 128:512 (October-December 1971):341-51; and idem, "Problems in Rebuilding the Tribulation Temple," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 129:513 (January-March 1972):75-80. See also Martin Levin, "Time for a New Temple?" *Time*, 16 October 1989, pp. 64–65.

³⁵⁶ 356. E.g., Johnson, pp. 499–502; Mounce, p. 221.

³ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 11:1.

saints, as the NT elsewhere affirms: ([1 Cor. 3:16–17](#); [Eph. 2:20–22](#); [1 Pet. 2:4–10](#); see [Rev. 3:12](#); [21:22](#)).

- e. This measuring compares closely with Ezekiel 40-42. In that passage Ezekiel must measure the new temple. In Rev. 21:15 John is to measure the new Jerusalem temple.
- f. (verse 2 leave out the outer court which has been given to the gentiles). This is likely the tribulation temple. The ESV Study Bible shares: *Because this language echoes Jesus' prediction of Jerusalem's destruction ([Luke 21:24](#); cf. [Dan. 8:13](#)), some believe that Revelation was written before A.D.70 and predicted that disaster. Again, however, others do not think that "the holy city" (cf. [Rev. 21:2](#); [22:19](#)) refers to earthly Jerusalem. Instead, they understand it as a reference to the true church. They argue that [11:8](#) implies that the earthly Jerusalem that rejected its Messiah now belongs to "the great city," along with Sodom and Egypt (see [17:18](#)). Forty-two months (see also [13:5](#)) is equivalent to "1,260 days" (counting 30 days to a month; cf. [11:3](#); [12:6](#)) and "a time, times, and half a time" (three and a half years; [12:14](#)), which is one-half of a sabbatical-year cycle, symbolizing the brevity of the church's suffering, which lasts until Christ comes. These calculations of time echo [Dan. 7:25](#); [12:7](#) and are thought by premillennialists to refer to a final "great tribulation" period ([Rev. 7:14](#)) during which the Antichrist will "make war" against the saints ([13:7](#)).*
- g. In Ezek 40:17 and 20 Ezekiel is to measure the outer court.
- h. Verse 2, the gentiles will trample the holy city for 42 months.

II. Verses 3-14: The two witnesses

³And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." ⁴These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. ⁵And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. ⁶These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.

⁷When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them. ⁸And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. ⁹Those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. ¹⁰And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

¹¹But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. ¹²And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched

them.¹³ *And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.*

¹⁴ *The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly.*

- a. Verse 3: they will prophesy for 1260 days
- b. David Jeremiah thinks this is Elijah and Moses. Dr. Rydelnic thinks they are prophets who prophesy like Moses and Elijah. These miracles are associated with Moses.
- c. Others think Enoch and Elijah since they were two men who did not die.
- d. Other less literal interpreters think the two witnesses may represent not two individuals but the faithful witness of the church throughout its persecutions.³⁶³⁴
- e. God will give them authority. The authority comes from God.
- f. God is the one speaking right now. Verse 1 say “someone said” and that is God unless it is the angel speaking for God.
- g. These two witnesses are God’s witnesses.
- h. Moody Bible Commentary shares: **John saw two witnesses, ministering for 42 months. This will probably take place during the second half of the tribulation since witnessing is presumably unopposed in the first half. Their sackcloth symbolizes their mourning for the sins of the rebellious world. They are called olive trees and lampstands.**⁵
- i. They prophesy for 1260 days.
- j. They will be clothed in sackcloth.
- k. This 1260 days is a common theme in the Bible: Dan 7:25; 12:7; Rev 12:6; 13:5⁶
- l. ESV Study Bible: *Scripture requires two witnesses to confirm testimony (Deut. 19:15; Matt. 18:16). The two witnesses here may symbolize the saints, as the parallel between Rev. 11:7 and 13:7 suggests. Wearing the sackcloth of repentance (cf. Isa. 37:1–2; Jonah 3:5; Matt. 11:21) to symbolize their message, they prophesy while the holy city suffers trampling (Rev. 11:2), the Messiah’s mother is nourished in the wilderness (12:6, 14), and the beast wields its authority (13:5). Some scholars believe that these are two actual individuals who will appear at the end of history.*
- m. Verse 4 tells more about these witnesses.
- n. Verse 4: they function as God’s two olive trees and lamp stands. Allusion to [Zechariah 4](#) when Zurubabel and Joshua the High Priest were the the first olive tree and lamp stand. They were the two witnesses then.
- o. See Zech 4:3, 11, 14

³⁶³ 363. E.g., Swete, p. 134; Mounce, p. 223; Beasley-Murray, p. 181; Morris, p. 147. Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, pp. 87–89, gave a good summary of the arguments pro and con for these three major views.

⁴ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 11:3.

⁵ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 82927-82930). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

⁶ [New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update](#) (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).

- p. ESV Study Bible: *In Zechariah’s vision, the “two olive trees” symbolized “two anointed ones” (Zech. 4:11, 14): a royal leader to rebuild God’s temple (Zech. 4:6–10) and a high priest to lead worship in it (Zech. 3:1–5). Thus the witnesses of Rev. 11:3 aptly represent all whom the Lamb has redeemed to serve as priests and rule as kings (1:6; 5:10).*
- q. Dr. Mulholland: *After hearing about the Temple, John is told about two witnesses, who are the prophets Moses and Elijah (see note on 11:5–6). These two prophets appeared with Jesus at the time of his transfiguration (Luke 9:28–36) and discussed “his exodus from this world, which was about to be fulfilled in Jerusalem.” In his vision John sees the deeper dimensions of this discussion. Moses and Elijah, representatives of the law and the prophets, are joined with Jesus in his death, resurrection, and ascension. I say this because it seems to me that the two witnesses participating in Jesus’ crucifixion (11:8, the only explicit mention of crucifixion in the vision) and subsequently being resurrected and then ascending to heaven forces the reader to associate this with Jesus’ crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.⁷*
- r. Verses 5–6: devastation caused by their ministry.
- i. Verse 5: they devour their enemies by supernatural fire. *These witnesses will be able to protect themselves by calling down fire on their enemies who try to harm them, as Elijah did (cf. 2 Kings 1:10–14). This is probably the meaning rather than the bizarre notion that fire will actually proceed from their mouths. No one will be able to kill them until God permits this at the very end of their ministry (v. 7).⁸*
 - ii. Verse 6a: They cause a three and a half year drought.
 - iii. Verse 6b: they turn waters into blood.
 - iv. Verse 6c: they strike the earth with plagues.
- s. The ESV Study Bible: *The witnesses especially fulfill the church’s prophetic role, pouring God’s word as fiery judgment from their mouth (cf. 2 Kings 1:10–12), announcing drought like Elijah (1 Kings 17:1), and turning waters ... into blood like Moses (Ex. 7:14–25).*
- t. 2 Ki 1:10–12 *Elijah replied to the captain, “If I am indeed a prophet, may fire come down from the sky and consume you and your fifty soldiers!” Fire then came down from the sky and consumed him and his fifty soldiers. ^{1:11} The king sent another captain and his fifty soldiers to retrieve Elijah. He went up and told him, “Prophet, this is what the king says, ‘Come down at once!’ ” ^{1:12} Elijah replied to them, “If I am indeed a prophet, may fire come down from the sky and consume you and your fifty soldiers!” Fire from God came down from the sky and consumed him and his fifty soldiers.*

⁷ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., “[Revelation,](#)” in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 499–500.

⁸ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 11:5.

- u. Je 5:14 *Because of that, the LORD, the God who rules over all, said to me, "Because these people have spoken like this, I will make the words that I put in your mouth like fire. And I will make this people like wood which the fiery judgments you speak will burn up."*
- v. Nu 16:35 *Then a fire went out from the LORD and devoured the 250 men who offered incense.*
- w. 1 Ki 17:1 *Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As certainly as the LORD God of Israel lives (whom I serve), there will be no dew or rain in the years ahead unless I give the command."*
- x. Lk 4:25 *But in truth I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's days, when the sky was shut up three and a half years, and there was a great famine over all the land.*
- y. Ex 7:17ff: water turns to blood.
- z. Dr. Mulholland: *This refers to what Moses did (Exod 7:14–12:30). Moses and Elijah are archetypal representatives of the law and the prophets in the OT. John was seeing the old covenant as God's witness against the rebellious order.*⁹
- aa. Verses 7-10: martyrdom of the 2 witnesses.
- bb. About the beginning of verse 7, when they complete their testimony, Dr. Mulholland shares: **It is possible that the vision now reveals the completion of the old covenant (cf. Matt 5:17), which was consummated in the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Messiah.**¹⁰
 - i. The beast coming out of the abyss makes war... (verse 7a the antichrist???)
 - ii. He comes out of the bottomless pit (verse 7b)
 - iii. **The identity of this entity is clarified in ch 13, where it comes as the manifestation of the dragon's rebellion in ch 12, a rebellion that consists in devouring the Messiah, the child of the woman. (See the notes on the appropriate sections of chs 12 and 13, as well as the discussion in ch 17.) It will be seen that the beast represents the incarnation of Satan's rebellion throughout human history. For John and his hearers the beast was manifest as the Roman Empire and, particularly, in the emperor.**¹¹

⁹ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 496.

¹⁰ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 496.

¹¹ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 496.

- iv. The bottomless pit: Dr. Mulholland: This is a synonym for the abyss, Death and Hades, Satan's realm (see note on 9:1).¹²

Moody Bible Commentary:

*The words when they have finished their testimony are crucial to this chapter. These faithful witnesses would be kept untouched by God until their service for Him was complete. Sinners would hear from God one more time. Only then would the beast have his way with them. The use of the word overcome in association with his victory is most significant. In all but two places in Revelation the word is reserved for the victory of the Lamb or the perseverance of His followers. But at this point in the vision, the outlook seemed dismal for the faithful. As John looked on, he saw the witnesses lying dead on the streets of Jerusalem, the same place that Jesus had been executed by crucifixion. The figurative references to the city as Sodom and Egypt depict the utter depravity into which this once faithful city had sunk. Once again, prophets of God were martyred.*¹³

- v. Their bodies cannot be buried (verse 9b)
- vi. Verse 8: they lie in the streets of Jerusalem.
- vii. Verse 10: the world rejoices in their deaths.
- viii. The ESV Study Bible: *Although the witnesses are invincible until they have finished their testimony, when their mission is accomplished the beast from the bottomless pit (13:1) will conquer them, not through spiritual seduction (God will soon vindicate them) but through martyrdom (11:7; cf. 13:7). The great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt is identified as the site of the martyrs' death and their Lord's crucifixion.*
- ix. *"the great city" in 16:19; 17:18; and five times in 18:10–21, where in these instances "the great city" is symbolically identified as "Babylon," a euphemism for Rome. In this verse (11:8), however, the symbol is apparently to be understood in a broader sense to include Jerusalem, where the two martyrs are killed and the "Lord was crucified." It is likely that John has merged Rome and Jerusalem here into one combined symbol, which would be fitting because Jerusalem was under the domination of Roman rule and because Jerusalem is identified as the capital of the new "unholy Roman Empire," where the Antichrist himself will establish his rule (cf. Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:3). "The great city" is further identified symbolically (or "spiritually"; see ESVfootnote) as "Sodom" (known for its depravity and rebellion against God) and as "Egypt" (known for its persecution of God's people), both of which again correspond to the city of Jerusalem, both in its persecution and martyrdom of the prophets and its rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah. Thus the symbol of "the great city" had broad significance in John's day, but it also stands as a representative symbol for every empire that grasps after divine glory and afflicts Christ's church even in*

¹² M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 496.

¹³ *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Kindle Location 82942). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

this present day. three and a half days. The celebration of the rebellious over the church's apparent demise through persecution will be short-lived.

- cc. Verses 11-14: Metamorphosis of the two witnesses
- i. Verses 11-12 they are raptured up into Heaven.
 - ii. This has comparisons with the valley of dry bones in Ezek 37
 - iii. Dr. Mulholland: The Greek text of the second clause reads *kai estēsan* [^{TG}2476, ^{ZG}2705] *epi tous podas autōn* ("and they stood upon their feet"), which is exactly the same wording in Ezek 37:10, LXX. Therefore, it is unmistakable that John here draws upon the imagery of Ezek 37:10, which is also a vision of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, including, in some form, resurrection (cf. Ezek 37:12–14). Thus, John sees in his vision symbols of the Messiah's death and resurrection that mark it as the fulfillment of both Daniel's (Dan 7:25; 12:7) and Ezekiel's visions.¹⁴
 - iv. Notice verse 11: great fear came upon their enemies.
 - v. While they are watching the "breath of life" comes upon them.
 - vi. They are immediately raised and taken to Heaven.
 - vii. Verse 12: They heard a loud voice say to "come up here." *The witnesses, and probably those beholding them before they ascend, will hear the "voice from heaven." It probably belongs to Jesus Christ (cf. 4:1). "The cloud" evidently refers to the shekinah in which Jesus Christ ascended (Acts 1:9). Their ascension is also similar to that of Elijah (2 Kings 2:11) and to Christians at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:17). In the case of the two witnesses, their enemies will watch them ascend.*¹⁵
 - viii. The ESV Study Bible: *If the two witnesses (v. 3) symbolize the church, then these verses predict the vindication of God's witnessing church in resurrection (cf. Ezek. 37:10) and enthronement in heaven (see Dan. 7:13; Acts 1:9). If they are two actual individuals, then they are miraculously resurrected at this point (cf. Rev. 11:7). Even if they are taken as literal people, their resurrection could still symbolize the resurrection of the saints either in the middle or at the end of the "great tribulation" period (7:14). As in 1:7, Acts 1:9, and several OT passages, the "cloud" symbolizes the mysterious active presence of God. This event will coincide with a great earthquake (Rev. 11:13; cf. 6:12; 16:18) that strikes terror in the hearts of survivors. The third woe is soon to come: the seventh and last trumpet (10:7; 11:15–18).*
 - ix. Verses 13-14: an earthquake destroys 10% of Jerusalem, leaving 7000 dead.

^{TG} Tyndale-Strong's Greek number

^{ZG} Zondervan Greek number

LXX Septuagint

¹⁴ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 497.

¹⁵ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 11:12.

- x. Dr. Mulholland: In this context, therefore, when John uses the imagery of the tithe, the implication is that the *entire* rebellious city has been judged and is fallen. What John sees here seems to be the reality Jesus announced related to his death: “The time for judging this world has come, when Satan, the ruler of this world, will be cast out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself” (John 12:31–32). John was conveying the vision’s revelation of how “Babylon” became “fallen Babylon.” He was seeing God’s judgment upon fallen Babylon and, at the same time, the mystery of fallen Babylon’s continued sway in history. We will see John portray this mystery again in the image of the beast having a mortal wound that was healed (13:3).¹⁶
- xi. The people are terrified and give glory to God in Heaven, that is interesting.
- xii. Moody Bible Commentary: This most likely refers to a legitimate, although localized, conversion of people who were previously antagonistic to Christ (see 16:9 for the contrary response).¹⁷
- xiii. The second woe is past.
- xiv. Third woe is coming quickly.

III. Verses 15-19: The Trumpet of God

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God,¹⁷ saying,

“We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.¹⁸ And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”

¹⁹ And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

- a. **The testimony of heaven (11:15–18): All heaven praises and worships God at the sounding of the seventh trumpet.**
- b. Seventh angel sounds.
- c. This ESV note is important: **Nearly all futurists and many idealists see this trumpet as heralding the second coming of Christ. As with the seventh seal (8:1–6), the scene now shifts from woes on earth to worship in heaven.** Songs from the future consummation speak back through time to the suffering church, announcing the day when the world’s kingdom has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, reversing the present when the nations and their rulers still “rage ... against

¹⁶ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., “[Revelation](#),” in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 498.

¹⁷ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 82951-82952). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

the LORD and against his Anointed” (Ps. 2:1–2). God’s redemptive kingdom was inaugurated in Christ’s first coming, death, and exaltation (Mark 1:15; 9:1; Acts 2:30–36). Here the elders celebrate a day still future, when God and his Christ have begun their unchallenged reign by judging the dead (foreshadowing Rev. 20:11–13), rewarding their servants (cf. 21:1–7; 22:1–5), and destroying the destroyers of the earth (cf. 20:14–15). Many futurists think that 11:18 skips forward beyond the millennium to the final judgment.

- d. Dr. Mulholland: *At the end of this section, we are told that “everyone else was terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven” (11:13). Thus, it appears that the response that enables persons to be redeemed from fallen Babylon and become citizens of New Jerusalem is to “fear God ... give glory to him” (cf. 14:7). Here, then, John was seeing the two aspects of the cross for fallen humanity. Its fallenness is judged and pronounced dead. But for those who respond, it becomes their redemption from the destructive and dehumanizing bondage of fallen Babylon. John sees here what Paul understood happened at the cross: “Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them” (2 Cor 5:14–15).¹⁸*
- e. Loud voice from Heaven.
- f. Verse 15 is a statement. The Kingdoms are merging.
- g. The Kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He will reign forever and ever.
- h. Verse 16 begins worship from the 24 elders, who sit on their thrones before God.
- i. They fall on their faces and worship.
 - i. *For his universal reign (11:15–16)*
 - ii. *Thanking him for his great power (11:17)*
 - iii. *For his righteous judgments (11:18)*
 - iv. *In rewarding the saints (11:18b)*
 - v. *In punishing sinners (11:18a, c)*
- j. Dr. Mulholland brings something interesting: The phrase “who is still to come,” which was present up to this point (see 1:4, 8; 4:8 and notes), disappears here and is absent again in 16:5. What has happened that results in the omission? John has just seen (11:3–13) that in the cross of Jesus, God has come to deal with those who rebelled against him. I think John was seeing what happened in the cross, that it was there that “the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah” (11:15, NRSV). Thus, the cross becomes the long-awaited “is to come” that formed the center of the Jewish expectations for the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. From that point on, God would be “the one who is and who always was” as in

¹⁸ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., *“Revelation,”* in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 500.

NRSV New Revised Standard Version

11:17 and 16:5, because in the cross, God has come to fulfill his covenant and his promises to the prophets.

- k. ***you have assumed your great power and have begun to reign.*** In the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Messiah, God inaugurated the reign of his kingdom.¹⁹
- l.
- m. There is a lot in verse 18. They are thanking and worshipping the Lord for what is happening.
 - i. The nations enraged
 - ii. God's wrath came
 - iii. The time came for the dead to be judged.
 - iv. The time came for the servants to be rewarded.
 - v. Saints are those who fear His name.
- n. **The Temple in heaven (11:19): John sees the Temple and the Ark of the covenant.**²⁰
- o. In Exodus God shows Moses a pattern of how the Tabernacle should be. The Tabernacle on earth is a replica. [Heb 9:11](#) and all of Hebrews teaches that Jesus' blood was sacrificed on the true tabernacle in Heaven.
- p. Moody: The open heavenly temple indicates that faithful Jewish believers will have access to God despite the adverse circumstances of the tribulation period.²¹

¹⁹ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 502–503.

²⁰ H. L. Willmington, [The Outline Bible](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), Re 11:15–19.

²¹ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 82972-82973). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.