

## Revelation 11

We are still in the middle of a parenthetical passage that began in chapter 10. We are in the midst of a pause in the actions and activities of the Tribulation Period judgments. As we come to Revelation 11, we have arrived at one of the most difficult passages in the book of the Revelation. It is hard to understand but keeping two thoughts in mind will help us as we study these verses.

1. We are on Jewish ground – The images and terminology are Jewish in nature. These verses deal with the future of the people of Israel.
2. We are dealing with future events – Some theologians take these verses and try to make them fit the past. Some even try to make them fit into the present. It seems to me that they will only fit into the future.

What we are going to study today is a prophecy concerning the future of the Jewish people and the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem during the Tribulation period.

### *The Two Witnesses*

***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.***

**Read pages 121-123 in book**

When John mentions the Temple, he is referring to place dedicated to Jewish worship. The Jews have been without a Temple for nearly 2,000 years now. This verse makes it crystal clear that a new Temple will be built there in Jerusalem

For some 500 years, from the time of Moses to David, the people of Israel worshiped God at the Tabernacle. It was there that sacrifices were carried out. It was there that the priests made intercession for the sins of the people. It was there that Israel sought their God

Before David died, he expressed a desire to build a permanent house of God, a Temple, where God's presence could dwell, (2 Sam. 7:1-4). God, however, refused to allow David to build the Temple, because he was a man of war, with blood on his hands. (1 Chron. 28:3). The privilege of building the Temple fell to David's son, Solomon, (2 Sam. 7:12-13). Even though David was not allowed to build the Temple, he began to accumulate the building materials that would be necessary for its construction, (1 Chron. 22:1-5; 13-16). Before David died, he charged Solomon to build the Temple, (1 Chron. 22:6-19).

Solomon built the Temple as he was commanded by David, and it took seven years to complete the building, (1 Kings 6:1, 38). When it was finished, it was dedicated to the Lord. At this dedication, the Ark of the Covenant was brought from the Tabernacle into the Temple, God demonstrated His approval of this house of worship by filling it with His Shekinah glory, (2 Chron. 7:1-3). This magnificent Temple cost an enormous amount of money to build. It is estimated that it would have \$500 billion dollars to build the Temple today.

This Temple building was in Jerusalem until it was destroyed by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar in 538 BC. The Jews were taken into captivity in Babylon at that time.

Some were allowed to return to Jerusalem, and in 490 BC, the Temple was rebuilt by Zerubbabel. However, this Temple was not as elaborate or as beautiful as the first Temple had been.

The prophet Haggai writes, *“Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do you see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?”* ( Hag. 2:3). This Temple was also destroyed in 168 BC, by Antiochus Epiphanes, who also desecrated the Temple by slaughtering a pig on the altar and demanding that he be worshiped as god. He ended up dismantling the Temple.

In an effort to gain the support of the Jews, Herod the Great, rebuilt this Temple in around 6 BC. Herod’s Temple took some 46 years to build, (John 2:20), and it was far grander than the second Temple was. It was Herod’s Temple where the Lord Jesus worshiped and preached. This Temple was also slated for destruction. In Matthew 24:1-2, Jesus prophesied that the Temple would be destroyed. This took place in 70 AD, when Titus, the Roman General, attacked Jerusalem. During that siege, which lasted from 66 AD to 70 AD, some one million Jews were slain. It is said that Titus crucified so many Jews during the siege that he ran out of wood to make new crosses. The roads were literally lined with crosses occupied by the rotting remains of the Roman victims.

When Jerusalem fell in 70 AD, the city was destroyed. The Temple was utterly demolished. All that remains of the ancient Temple is the Western Wailing Wall. Orthodox Jews go there to pray every day. They believe that all prayers ascend to Heaven by means of Jerusalem. So, they write their prayers on paper and stuff them in the cracks of the wall. Jews from around the world can E-mail their prayers to Jerusalem. These prayers are printed and taken to the Wailing Wall.

Currently, the Jews have no Temple, but that will change in the near future. When John mentions a Temple in verse 1, he is letting us know that the new Temple must be built in Jerusalem. It might surprise you to learn that some people are already making preparations for such an event.

### **Read page 123 in book**

So, one huge problem that has always stood between the Jews and a new Temple is the Mosque of Omar, or the Dome of the Rock. This is the third holiest site for Muslims. It was completed in 691 AD. Inside the dome is a great rock. Muslims believe that that Mohammad ascended into Heaven from this rock, conferred with Moses, and returned to earth with the prayers that all Muslims are supposed to pray. For many centuries, it was believed that the Dome of the Rock was built on the site of the original Temple. It was believed that the Dome of the Rock would have to be demolished before a new Temple could be rebuilt. However, recent discoveries in excavations have revealed that the ancient Temple was actually about 100 years north of the Dome of the Rock site. This, a new Temple could be build without disturbing the Muslim holy place.

By the way, the problems in the Middle East today are not political problems; they are religious problems. Every group involved in the turmoil in the Israel wants control of the ancient city of Jerusalem. It is the most contested ground in the world. For the Jews, their struggle is one of survival. For the Arabs and Muslims, their goal is the annihilation of Israel. It will all be settled one day!

It is interesting to read that preparations orthodox Jews are making for the rebuilding of their Temple. One group, know as The Temple Institute, is dedicated to the ideal of rebuilding the Jewish Temple. They have been working to prepare for the day when the Temple is a reality. They have already prepared many of the items they will need to resume Temple worship.

A visit to their website at <http://www.templeinstitute.org> is very enlightening! They have reconstructed most of the garments worn by the High Priest. They have also produced many of the instruments used by the Levites in Temple worship. The day is coming and the Jews are getting ready. They know that a new Temple will indeed stand in Jerusalem some day soon. The Jewish preparations for the rebuilding of the Temple makes me want to look up!

The message delivered by this promise of a new Temple in Jerusalem is that God is not through with the Jewish people. They are still His chosen ones, and He still has a plan for them. (Rom. 11:1-5, 25-26). This return to the Temple will be a refinement. They will be persecuted/scattered, but many will come to know Christ.

The Lord has already returned them to their homeland. On May 14, 1948, a nation that had been extinct from nearly 1,900 years was raised from the ashes (Read Isa. 66:8). Israel became a nation and was restored to her former land. Our generation has seen God's hand of protection upon the people of Israel during the wars they fought and won against overwhelming odds, and God isn't through yet! He will continue to use them and will save a remnant of the Jewish people in the End. The promise of a new Temple is simply God's way of saying, "*I am not finished with Israel!*"

John was told to take a reed and measure the Temple, the altar and the worshipers. This reed refers to a plant that grows in the Jordan valley. These reeds grow to a height of 15 to 20 feet. They are hollow and lightweight, yet they are exceedingly strong. They were used in ancient times as measuring sticks. A "rod" is about six cubits, or nine feet. John is told to take the measuring rod and measure the Temple.

This is symbolic of two things:

- 1.— The act of measuring speaks of possession. God is claiming the Temple, the altar and the worshipers as His Own. This is just another reminder that God is not through with the Jewish people.
2. - God will keep every promise He has ever made to the nation of Israel. He has set them aside for a time because of their unbelief. In the end, however, Israel will be saved! God will continue to work in and through Israel until a remnant is saved, (Zech. 12:10-13:1; 8-9).

Some today are attempting to replace Israel with the church. They claim that Israel has been forever set aside and the church has inherited the promises God made to Israel. There is a VAST difference between Israel and the church and that difference must always be kept in mind when studying the Bible. They may be His Chosen people, but we are the Bride of Christ.

***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.***

**Read pg 124 in book**

John is told not to measure the outer court of the Temple. It is to be given to the Gentiles and they will occupy the city for three and one-half years. These are the days of the second half of the Tribulation Period. The Temple will be rebuilt sometime during the early days of the Tribulation. No doubt, one of the first accomplishments of the Antichrist will be to arrange a peace treaty between Israel and her enemies. He will do what no other diplomat has ever been able to do.

The Antichrist will bring a temporary, fake peace. When Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace comes, He will bring permanent peace to Israel. This peace treaty will give the Jews the right to build their new house of worship, ( Dan. 9:27). The Jews will rebuild their Temple and will begin their sacrificial system of worship, and once again the Jews will slaughter animals in their attempt to keep the Law of God. Things will go well for a while, but somewhere around the mid-point of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will enter the Holy of Holies in the Temple and he will enthrone himself as god, (Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:3-4). This event will mark the beginning of the most intense time of persecution Israel will have ever experienced, (Matt. 24:16-22). The Jews will lose their Temple and they will be driven from their lands. They will be hunted down and killed by the forces of the Antichrist and by the rest of their enemies. The Reasons For This Punishment? Israel will be shown that animal sacrifice cannot take away sin and bring peace with God. God will allow them to build their Temple, and He will allow them to sacrifice again. However, their new Temple is nothing more than further rejection of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Their sacrifices reject the Gospel and reject the cross and the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus Christ did what the blood of animals has never been able to do or will ever be able to do, (Heb. 9:11-15; 10:10-14.). Because they have rejected the Gospel, the Jews must pay a price. They will be persecuted and pursued by their enemies. This process will serve to purify the Jewish nation and prepare them for the return of the Lord Jesus. When He comes, the remnant of the Jewish nation that is left will turn to Him and receive them as their Messiah, (Zech. 12:10-13:1; 8-9).

Some preachers, including John Hagee and others, are preaching that Jews are saved by a different method other than Jesus. In truth, there is one plan of salvation for all people and His name is Jesus Christ, Acts 4:12; John 14:6. The Jews have rejected Jesus and they will be punished as a result. Those who believe will be saved, John 1:11-12.

***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.”***

Read pg 125 in book

These two men are raised up for a special purpose. These two verses tell us much about these men and what they are sent to do.

1. They are called witnesses –The word usually refers to someone who gives a testimony about something, however, as so many Christians began to give their lives for the cause of Christ, the word came to be associated with those who gave their lives for their faith. These two men have come to witness to God’s truth and, as we shall see, they will give their lives for Him too.
2. They are sent as a team – God always has His witness teams: Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, and Paul and Silas (see Luke 10:1). God sends two witnesses because He wants the truth to be established. The Law stipulated that matters had to be established by the word of two witnesses, (Deut. 19:15; Matt. 18:16).
3. They are sent to prophesy. What will be the content of their message? No one knows for sure, but I think they will stand outside the newly completed Temple and preach Jesus to the Jews in Jerusalem. They will talk about how Jesus Christ has fulfilled all the prophecy.

Maybe they will tell of His death, His resurrection and of His return. They will talk about from the Word of God that the Temple and its worship are vain. They will preach the Gospel of grace and salvation through Jesus Christ.

4. They will be clothed in sackcloth – Sackcloth is a symbol of mourning. These men will not come with a message a peace, comfort and hope. They will bring a message of condemnation and judgment to a wayward people.

5. Their ministry will last for three and one-half years

6. They are described as “*olive trees*” and “*candlesticks*” – This is symbolic of God’s hand on their ministry. The olive tree is the source of olive oil. It is often a type of the Holy Spirit in the Bible. These men are anointed by the Spirit of God for their particular ministry. The “olive tree” speaks of their unction. The “candlestick” speaks of their function. They will come to bring the light of God’s message to a darkened world. As the book states this imagery is taken from Zecharia 4:2-4, 11-14.

***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.***

These two men will be extremely unpopular because of the message they have been sent to deliver. As a result, many will try to kill them. But, these men are under divine protection. Everyone who tries to kill them will be killed by them. They will have the power to destroy their attackers with fire from their mouths. Understand, as long as you are in the Lord’s will, and He is not done with you yet, you are invincible! He will keep His hedge of protection around you and keep you safe until it is time for Him to take you home to glory. Until the Lord gets finished with you, no man or no devil can harm you.

***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.***

These two men will be able to use miraculous signs to prove the authenticity of their message. They will be able to shut up the heavens as Elijah did (1 Kings 17:1). They will be able to turn water to blood and call down plagues from Heaven as Moses did. They will have immense power at their disposal and they will be able to use it whenever they wish.

Who are these men? Some say Moses (representing the Law), and Elijah (representing the prophets).

Moses, he is mentioned in Malachi 4:4 just before Elijah is mentioned in verse 5. The miracles performed by the two witnesses are like those performed by Moses in Exodus. Also, it was Moses and Elijah who appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.

According to Mal. 4:5, Elijah will return before Jesus comes. John the Baptist fulfilled this prophecy in the spirit of Elijah, according to Jesus, Matt. 11:14; 17:10-13. However, Malachi says that Elijah will come (Malachi 4:5-6). Also, Elijah never died (see Heb. 9:27). For this reason, some believe that these two are Enoch and Elijah, as Enoch never tasted death either, (Gen. 5:24).

However, no one knows for sure. The Bible does not identify them, and no one can say with absolute certainty who they are. All that we really need to know is that God always has His witnesses!

***7 Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them and overpower and kill them.***

When they have finished their appointed ministry, the Antichrist will be allowed to kill them. Until that moment, they are protected by the hand of God and cannot be killed. We are told that they are killed by ***“the beast that comes up from the Abyss (bottomless pit)”***. This is a reference to the Antichrist. He is called “the beast” 38 times in the Revelation. He ascends out of Hell itself letting us know that he is demonically empowered and controlled. He will make war against the witnesses, and he will be allowed to overcome them and kill them. We will learn more about him in coming weeks.

Death is not in the hands of a man or of a devil. Death is in the hands of God Almighty. He decides when people leave this world, and you cannot die until He says it is time. So many people live their lives in fear of death. They fail to grasp the truth that death is powerless against them until God severs the golden cord of life and allows death to claim the soul. There is, therefore, no need to fear men, armies or devils. You will not die until He says it is time and you will not live a second longer when He says it is time to go! (Isa. 54:17.) We don’t understand how the Lord could allow those innocent children to die in Uvalde, or the many Jews in concentration camps. We just have to trust the Lord that one day He will make things right and things will make sense.

***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.***

**See pg 126 in book**

When they have finished their appointed ministry, the Antichrist will be allowed to kill them. Until that moment, they are protected by the hand of God and cannot be killed

The bodies of these men will be left in the very streets where they were killed. They will lay there in Jerusalem and no one will remove their bodies or attempt to bury them. Verse 9 tells us that all the people of the earth will see this sight. Fifty years ago, it was a mystery how this could happen. In our day, we see live events from around the world twenty-four hours a day. Satellite technology has made it possible for us to see what is happening on the other side of the world with less than 8 seconds delay in time. The cable news channels like CNN, MSNBC, etc. will broadcast the images of these dead prophets around the clock.

Verse 10 tells us that the people of the earth will rejoice because these two men are dead. For three and one-half years these men have preached the Gospel and caused plagues to be poured out on people.

Now they are dead, and the world celebrates. They act as if it were Christmas time. They celebrate, party and they exchange gifts because these men are dead. No doubt, the preaching of these two witnesses drove them crazy. They have rejected Jesus Christ and His blood and turned a deaf ear to Biblical preaching. They have given their allegiance to the devil, and they do not want to hear about God.

By the way, this is the only scene of joy on the earth during the whole Tribulation. And they are happy because God's men are dead, and God's message is silent. What a tragedy!

This world hates preaching that exalts Christ and demands holiness. This world hates preaching that stands on the Bible and says *"Jesus is the Truth, and there is no other way."* This world cannot stand preaching that condemns and calls to repentance homosexuals, abortionists, murders and other sinners. This world hates preaching that magnifies Jesus. They will rejoice when it is gone. Then, they can settle in and listen to the prophets of love and acceptance and be happy as they plunge headlong into Hell.

***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.***

The bodies of these men are allowed to lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three and one-half days. The world has watched as their bodies turn blue, pass through the various stages of rigor mortis, and begin to bloat. Then, a strange thing happens, those bodies begin to stir! The two witnesses stand to their feet and the world trembles in fear. The world reacts in fear. The fact that these men are alive again after being dead for three days proves that they are the real deal. People know that they are men of God and that the message they have been preaching is true. Perhaps they understand that this is the work of God. Maybe they have a brief moment in time when they understand that they are headed for judgment! There in the midst of their celebration, they are interrupted by a resurrection. They will watch it on live television. They will see it for themselves. They are interrupted by proof that God, not man, not Satan, not Antichrist, is really in control.

***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.***

Then, while the world watches, the Lord God will reenact the Rapture, (1 Thess 4:16-17), and the two witnesses will rise up into Heaven. The world will see what it missed out on when Jesus came. Maybe they will comprehend in that moment of time what happened when millions of people disappeared in the Rapture of the church.

Again, the unbelieving world will be given a clear testimony of the power of God Almighty! Satan, the Antichrist and mankind will be reminded that God is in control of the world and all that happens in it. They will be helpless to stop this resurrection and rapture of the two witnesses.

**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.**

#### **Bottom half of pg 126**

Before the world can catch its breath, a great earthquake will hit Jerusalem. God judges the city which has denied Him and His Son. A tenth part of the city will crumble to the ground and seven thousand people will die. We are told that **“the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.”** This probably refers to a remnant of the Jews. They see these events, repent of their sins and call on Christ for salvation. God will use even these events to bring glory to His name!

In verse 14 we are told, **“The second woe has passed; the third woe is coming soon.”** More horrors are on the way! The worst is yet to come, and we are going to look into far more horrible things. We think our world is in bad shape, and it is! We talk about the wickedness of people, and the evil that flourishes all around us. But, think about this: We are living in a world that is inhabited by the redeemed people of God. The Holy Spirit is here suppressing evil and hindering its spread in the world. In the Tribulation Period, the church is gone, so no one is praying for the world. The Bible will probably be taken out of circulation. The Spirit of God will still be present to convict people of sin, but the world will grow more evil than you and I can comprehend. I am glad that I am saved and that I will not be here for those awful days.

### ***The Seventh Trumpet***

#### **See pg 127-128 in book**

This brings us to the end of a very long section that began back in Rev. 10:1. In this passage, the seventh trumpet, which was announced in Rev. 10:7, is about to sound. When it is sounded, this trumpet will unleash God’s final acts of judgments upon the earth.

The seventh trumpet will bring about a devastating wave of judgment. It will fulfill the ancient prophecies of (Joel 2:1-2). When it is sounds, the seven bowl judgments are revealed. These bowls contain the final, and awful judgments of God, (Rev. 15:1). The sound of the seventh trumpet alerts the world that King Jesus is about to reclaim everything that belongs to Him. Now, the 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet is sounded here in Rev. 11:1, but the events it brings to pass are not recorded until we get to Rev 15. Chapters 12-14 are a retelling of the Tribulation story from a different perspective. In Rev. 6-11, the focus has been on the Lord Jesus. We have learned about the process He uses to take possession of this earth. Rev. 12-14 takes the focus off the Lord and places in on the Antichrist. We have been observing the Tribulation from God’s perspective. For the next few chapters we will observe that awful period of time from Satan’s perspective.

This passage takes us forward in time to the very edge of eternity. We are transported ahead to the end of the age to a time when Jesus has taken possession of the world and judged sin and sinners. As we look ahead to that blessed day, we find Heaven in a state of rejoicing.



Today, we want to look into these verses, and by virtue into Heaven itself. In doing so, we are allowed to witness Heaven's reaction to the reign of the Lord Jesus. I want to show you the great reasons why we see worship, praise and excitement in Heaven as time comes to an end. The words "great voices" translate the Greek words "mega" and "phoney". We get the word "megaphone" from these words. It refers to shouting and loud speech. This is a picture of loud, vigorous praise in glory, v. 15-16.

***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,***

The Scope of His Kingdom are the kingdoms of this world. In the Greek, the word "kingdoms" is singular. There are many rulers, leaders, kings and presidents in this world, but there is but one true kingdom. Men think they rule, in reality, Satan rules this world today. Satan is called "*the god of this world*" in ( 2 Cor. 4:4). The Lord Jesus called him "the prince of this world" three times in John's Gospel, John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.

The truth of Satan's rule can be seen in the hatred that is being leveled against Jesus Christ and His Gospel in this world. People have no reason to hate Jesus. They do so because they are led to by the devil! He is the ruler of this world today.

His kingdom is to be short-lived. Jesus Christ will come in glory and power and assume His rightful place as King, Lord and God of this world! There is just one rightful King and one day, the whole world will bow at His feet and worship Him, Phil. 2:9-11!

***"He will reign for ever and ever"*** – Jesus will not be like a human ruler. All human rulers eventually reach the end of their reign. They die or are deposed and replaced by another. Not Jesus! He will reign eternally, "Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations," ( Psalm 145:13).

***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.***

Every human kingdom fails because it is built on the limited power of people. Putin rules by the power of fear, but he will be overthrown. God's kingdom is established on One Who holds all power, (Matt. 28:18). He will never be overcome by any enemy, for He has placed all His enemies under His feet,( Heb. 2:8). He will never be deposed by any rival, for He has no rivals,( Ps. 86:10).

God's kingdom is an everlasting kingdom! He has always reigned! It may look like Satan has his hands on the wheel in this world today. It may look like he is in control. Even Satan is the servant of Almighty God and he operates within a limited sphere of activity. He does only that which God allows him to do. His activity is limited by the providence, sovereignty, purposes and power of God.

(Satan had to get permission to attack Job – Job 1-2.) Satan is a finite, limited, created being. He must always yield to the One Who has reigned by eternity past; the One Who will always reign! People can believe what they will, but one day the kingdom of this world will be given over to the Lord Jesus. He will rule and reign on the throne of this earth forever. Praise God! No wonder Heaven rejoices. I thank God that I will be there when Heaven bursts forth with praise. However, we can thank Him that we can praise Him today.

***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.”***

As I said, this world hates Jesus and demonstrates that hatred against Him when He comes to reign. This verse looks ahead to that day when the armies of the world will gather themselves together to fight against the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming, Rev. 16:14.

The hatred of the Lord is clear to see in our day. Everywhere you look; this world is trying to eradicate the name of Jesus and anything to do with Him from the public arena. They will not bow to Him! Their hatred is expressed in Psalm 2:1-3. There, we see that they will rise up against Him and attempt to conquer the Lord. But Psalm 2:4-9 tell us that God will have the final say in the matter.

In the end, lost sinners will pay for their rejection of Jesus by having to face Him on Judgment Day, (Rev. 20:11-15, 18b). God will have the final word and all lost sinners will receive the due punishment for their sins, (Rom. 6:23). What a tragedy, since they could be saved if they would only come to Him!

While the lost sinners will face the Lord in judgment, faithful believers will be honored for their devotion to Him. He will reward His servants. Those who have faithfully served Him will be rewarded by the Lord one day. One day, every act of devotion to Jesus will be rewarded by Him. Nothing was so small that He missed it. He saw every sacrifice, every labor of love, every gift, every deed, which was done in His Name, and He will reward all those who have faithfully served Him! Even something so small as a cup of cold water given in His name will be rewarded some day, (Mark 9:41.)

***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 church does not have a Temple, we are the Temple! The open Temple and the vision of the Ark serve to remind us that in Heaven, we will have access to the Lord. You see, for the Jew, the Ark of the Covenant represented the presence of God, the communion of God and the redemption of God.

In the Bible, there are five different names for the Ark of the Covenant mentioned. These five names reveal what God is doing in these verses.

1. The Ark of the Covenant – Numb. 10:33 – The ancient Ark contained the Law. In these verses we see a world that has transgressed God’s Law. The world has angered the Lord and He has come down to judge them!

2. The Ark of the Testimony – Ex. 25:22 – The Ark testified to God’s holiness and man’s sinfulness. God is still holy and man is still a sinner. As a sinner, man will be judged by a holy God.

3. The Ark of God – 1 Sam. 3:3 – The Ark was the only visible throne of God on the earth. This vision of the Ark reminds everyone that God is still on His throne!

4. The Ark of Strength – Psa. 132:8 – It was called this because of the miracles and great works associated with it. We are reminded here that God is still Almighty God and He still reigns in power.

5. The Holy Ark – 2 Chron. 35:3 – It was called the Holy Ark because it is where God dwelt! This vision of the Ark reminds us that God is still alive and well!

Verse 19 closes with premonitions of impending disasters. More horrors, worse horrors, than those we have seen thus far, are on the horizon. We are at the half-way point of the book and of the Tribulation. We have seen things from God’s perspective, now we will see things from Satan’s perspective.