

Celebrating 50 years of Proclaiming Christ
BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

The Temple of God in the Church Age.

Revelation 11:1-2



¹ Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, “Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, ² but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months. ³ And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.” ⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. ⁵ And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed. ⁶ They have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may 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 kind of plague, as often as they desire. ⁷ And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, ⁸ and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. ⁹ For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, ¹⁰ and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on 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, and their enemies watched them. ¹³ And at 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 has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.



Trumpets 1 thru 6

Interlude

Ch 10 & 11

Trumpet 7



**What is the greatest
challenge to reading
and teaching
Revelation?**



What is the greatest challenge to reading and teaching Revelation?

**Determining what is literal
and figurative.**



**Who was the
master of figurative
language in the NT?**



**Who was the
master of figurative
language in the NT?**

It (was) is Jesus.



figure of speech (1824)

a form of expression (as a simile or metaphor) used to convey meaning or heighten effect often by comparing or identifying one thing with another that has a meaning or connotation familiar to the reader or listener

Merriam-Webster



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Temple of God

Figurative or Literal?



Is John measuring an actual rebuilt temple in Jerusalem?

Are the two witnesses two particular individuals who breathe fire out of their mouths?

Are we talking Enoch, Moses, or Elijah?



Revelation 11:1



- Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff,

**Notice in spite of being given
a measuring rod and being
told to measure we get NO
measurements.**

**“like a staff” is important
language.**



Psalm 23:1–4 (ESV)

- ¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. ³ He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. ⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; **your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**



What did God use with Moses to assure the Jewish people that He had appeared to Moses and would be with him in the journey to free Israel from bondage?

A Staff



Revelation 11:1



- Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, “Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there,

The temple that Jesus said was going to be destroyed was destroyed in 70 AD.

Matthew 24:1-2

Is it part of God's plan to rebuild the temple again so it can be destroyed another time?



**What is the
new or true
Temple of God
in the NT?**



The temple of God in NT are **the true believers in Christ and His gospel.**

They are the ones for whom the rod and staff protect—they have been set aside as God's own possession.



John 2:19–21

- Jesus answered them, “Destroy **this temple**, and in three days I will raise it up.” ²⁰ The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” ²¹ **But he was speaking about the temple of his body.**



1 Corinthians 3:16

- Do you not know that **you are God's temple** and that God's Spirit dwells in you?



1 Corinthians 3:17

- If anyone destroys **God's temple**, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and **you are that temple.**



1 Corinthians 6:19

- Or do you not know that your body **is a temple of the Holy Spirit** within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,



2 Corinthians 6:16

- What agreement has the temple of God with idols? **For we are the temple of the living God;** as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.



Ephesians 2:19–22

- So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ **built on** the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows **into a holy temple in the Lord**. ²² In him you also are being **built together** into a **dwelling place** for God by the Spirit.



If unsaved Jews built a new temple in Jerusalem and began sacrificing animals at that temple again would God occupy it and would it be the “Temple of God”?

Look @ Revelation 2:9 & 3:9



Revelation 2:9 & 3:9

- “ ‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of **those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.**
- Behold, I will make those of the **synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie** —behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you.



Notice very clearly that Jews who do not follow Christ 'are a synagogue of Satan.'

How could Jews who have rejected Christ in the 1st century be called 'of the synagogue of Satan' while Jews who rebuild the 'temple of God' in the last century but still reject Christ be accepted as worshippers?



Notice the 3 things John is measuring:

The temple (w/o the outer court), the altar, and the worshippers.

If there was literal temple being rebuilt and sacrifices were being offered again, the altar would be a repudiation of all that Christ accomplished on the cross.

And those inside could not be described as worshippers.



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Turn Back to John 4:19-24



John 4:19–24 (ESV)

¹⁹ The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” ²¹ Jesus said to her, **“Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.”** ²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the **true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth,** for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those **who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”**



**Could we describe orthodox
Jews offering sacrifices in
Jerusalem to atone for sins and
appease God's wrath as true
worshippers?**

**How could they be worshipping
in truth if they reject Christ?**



Revelation 11:2



- **but** do not measure the court outside the temple; **leave that out, for it is given over to the nations,**

Passive Voice

Notice how measure is being used here.

Measuring in this context is: controlling, marking off, governing, regulating

John is not to measure the outer courtyard because it will be given to the nations.

John is describing two aspects of the Christian life during this age described as 42 months.



Revelation 11:2



- and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.

The holy city is not literally limited to Jerusalem.

The courtyard and the holy city in contrast to the temple, altar and worshippers represent the aspects of the Christianity that God has permitted Satan, the beast, and the Gentiles (the nations) to impact, harm, persecute, and even conquer.



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turn over to

Revelation 13:5-7



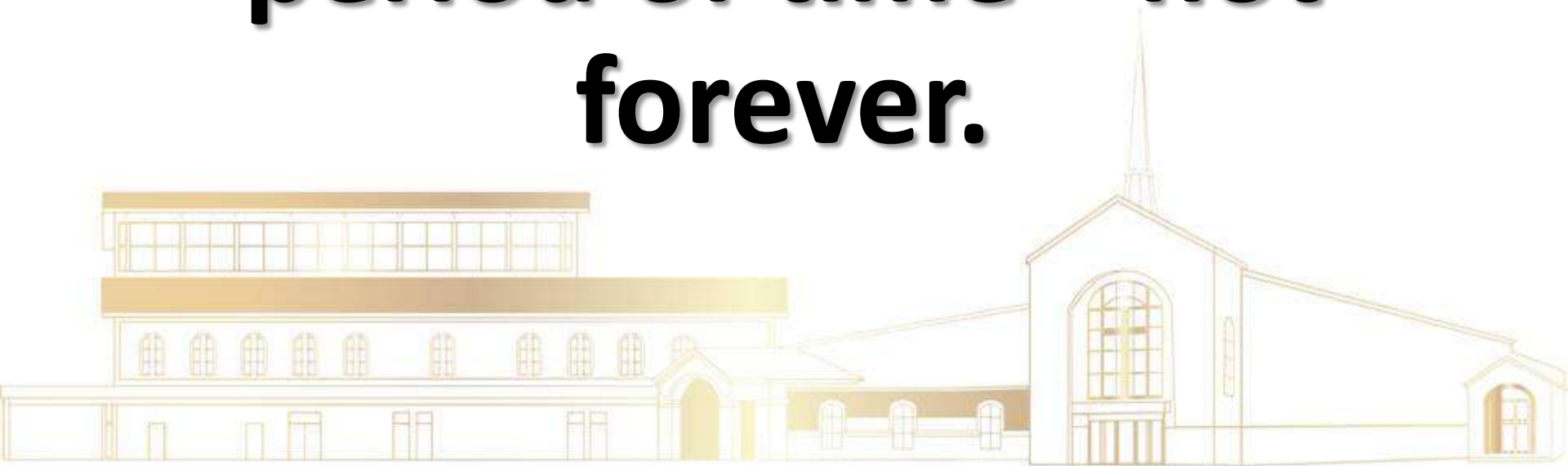
Revelation 13:5–7



- And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.⁶ It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

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Be encouraged.
42 months is a limited
period of time—not
forever.



Why 42 months?

42 months is half of what would be viewed as complete or 7 years.

In the same way that the two witnesses lie dead for 3 ½ days; again, this is half of what would be complete 7 days or one week.

Or time, times, half a time is also half of what would be a complete cycle or 7 years.



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Turn Back To

Daniel 7:18-27



¹⁸ But **the saints of the Most High** shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.’ ¹⁹ “Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet, ²⁰ and about the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and that seemed greater than its companions. ²¹ **As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them,** ²² **until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.**



²³ “Thus he said: ‘As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces. ²⁴ As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall **wear out the saints of the Most High**, and shall think to change the times and the law; and **they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.** ²⁶ But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. ²⁷ And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of **the saints of the Most High**; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.’



Our struggle in Daniel is the same as Revelation—in a book that is packed full of symbolical language: metaphors, similes, and figures of speech how do we take “time, times, and half a time” and insist it must be just 3 ½ years in the future?

? Tribulation Saints ?



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**We can't have it BOTH ways.
The same saints the beast
wears out also inherit the
kingdom.**



Daniel 7:18

- But **the saints of the Most High** shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.'



Saints are saints.

The same saints in Daniel are the same saints in Matthew, Acts, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Timothy, Philemon, Hebrews, and Jude.

The early church reading Revelation would have no reason to exempt themselves from the persecution of the beast.



How would saints living under the persecution of Rome interpret these words:

it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

Rev 13:7



And how would they interpret 42 months?

If they saw themselves as the saints being wore out or potentially wore out from the beast—why would they push the 42 months to the future?****



Revelations 11:1



- Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, “Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there,

**Measuring rod, measure,
temple, altar, outer court and
holy city is all figurative.**

**So why would 42 months be
literal?**





If Revelation was written before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD then every early church reader would have understood our text as symbolic as soon as the temple was destroyed and the altar desecrated.

Or if Revelation was written after the destruction of the temple in 70 AD then the early church reader would have understood temple in a symbolic or figurative way.



Measure describes God's protection:

1. Temple = church as a whole

2. Altar = the spiritual sacrifices

Christians offer to God

3. Worshippers = the spirit of the true believer



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#1

The Temple



Matthew 16:18

- And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**



The early church needed to be reminded that:

God has not permitted Satan, his demons, the beast or any other entity or individual power to destroy His church or the body of Christ.

John has marked off the temple from the outer court isolating one from the other. While the outer court and holy city will be trampled underfoot by the nations the true church will not.



I am not talking about buildings or bodies.

Churches have been and will continue to be destroyed and Christians have been and will continue to be martyred for the faith.

But God will not permit the global eradication of his witness on the earth. There will always be a remnant on the planet until Christ returns to establish unite the kingdom of this world with the kingdom of our LORD and his Christ.



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#2

The Altar



1 Peter 2:5

- you yourselves like **living stones** are being built up as **a spiritual house**, to be a holy priesthood, **to offer spiritual sacrifices** acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.



Romans 12:1

- I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.



God has not permitted Satan, his demons, the beast or any other entity the power to keep your worship from being presented to God.

Satan nor the beast cannot keep your prayers from reaching the altar of incense and nothing can interfere with efficacy of Christ's atonement.

Thus the altar symbolically representing the place where our worship is offered and our prayers are dealt with has been measured by John or separated from the realm where the nations rule—the outer court and holy city.

Measuring the altar and worshippers reminds us of the truth Paul taught us in

Romans 8:31-39



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#3

The Worshipers



³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

