

This is a difficult chapter to interpret. There are two major views.

First View: the verses are to be taken literally. The temple will be rebuilt, two actual witnesses will appear, and sacrifice at the temple will begin again.

Second View: the verses are symbolic. The temple is the church, the witnesses are the church which must suffer martyrdom, and the great city represents civilization utterly alien to the will of God. This chapter represents the little book of Revelation 10, sweet to the taste, but bitter to the stomach.

<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Then I was given a measuring stick, and I was told, "Go and measure the Temple of God and the altar, and count the number of worshipers."</p>	<p>At the end of Chapter 10, John is actively involved in taking the scroll and eating it. Here John is also active in the vision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The measuring of the temple is a symbolic way of declaring its preservation, much like Ezekiel 40-42</li><li>• Here the temple means the church and that the church would be preserved through trials and tribulation.</li><li>• <a href="#">1 Peter 2:5</a> expresses that all believers are the priesthood in God's temple</li></ul>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>But do not measure the outer courtyard, for it has been turned over to the nations. They will trample the holy city for 42 months.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The outer courtyard is the unmarked church, which is not really the church at all. These are the Nicolaitans and other false teachings which are turned over to be outside the true church.</li><li>• The godless nations and this false church will trample the children of God for a period of time.</li><li>• There is a time when persecution will fall on the church, but the church will prevail because God is building the church. <a href="#">Daniel 8:9-14</a> <a href="#">Matthew 16:18</a>  <a href="#">Luke 21:24</a> the times of the Gentiles</li></ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will be clothed in burlap and will prophesy during those 1,260 days."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The word "and" connects vs 2 with vs 3 Pagans will trample on the church and the church will be given power to witness</li><li>• The two witnesses are modeled after Moses and Elijah</li><li>• Elijah had the authority to bring down fire Moses had the authority to bring plagues</li><li>• These witnesses are likely the church that mourns for the wickedness of the world and prophesies against the evil in this world.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The church does so at the same time of the persecution</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>These two prophets are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of all the earth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The imagery here is of <a href="#">Zechariah 4</a></li> <li>• The olive trees and lampstands are the church.</li> <li>• The olive oil is the Spirit of God</li> <li>• The church moves forth by the power of God's Spirit and lights the way in a dark world</li> </ul>
<p><b>5</b></p> <p>If anyone tries to harm them, fire flashes from their mouths and consumes their enemies. This is how anyone who tries to harm them must die.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">2 Kings 1:10-12</a> shows us a similar event with Elijah</li> </ul>
<p><b>6</b></p> <p>They have power to shut the sky so that no rain will fall for as long as they prophesy. And they have the power to turn the rivers and oceans into blood, and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they wish.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">1 Kings 17:1</a></li> <li>• The drought lasted 3.5 years <a href="#">Luke 4:25</a> <a href="#">James 5:17</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Exodus 7:20</a> <a href="#">Exodus 8:12</a></li> <li>• The purpose here may be to let the church know that they have, by the power of the Spirit, the same authority as the prophets of old.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7</b></p> <p>When they complete their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the bottomless pit will declare war against them, and he will conquer them and kill them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Here is the first time we see reference to the Beast</li> <li>• In contrast to the Lamb of God who is gentle and redemptive, yet fierce in protection, we have a figure which is nothing but pure evil.</li> <li>• This evil one comes from the pit <a href="#">Luke 8:31</a> <a href="#">Daniel 7:7</a></li> <li>• Here we may see the church, in the entire world, going underground. Everyplace on the earth will not tolerate the witness of the church and thus the church is symbolically and literally killed for its witness.</li> </ul>

<p><b>8</b></p> <p>And their bodies will lie in the main street of Jerusalem, the city that is figuratively called "Sodom" and "Egypt," the city where their Lord was crucified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elsewhere in Revelation we see Rome as the city and it was Rome that crucified Jesus. Here Jerusalem seems to be symbolic of the wicked global power of the whole earth that broadcasts the death of the saints.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9</b></p> <p>And for three and a half days, all peoples, tribes, languages, and nations will stare at their bodies. No one will be allowed to bury them.</p>	<p>Like the church at Smyrna, the saints will suffer persecution and indignity because no one is allowed to care for the dead.</p>
<p><b>10</b></p> <p>All the people who belong to this world will gloat over them and give presents to each other to celebrate the death of the two prophets who had tormented them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A holiday is declared because the witness of the church has been silenced. The torment against their wicked conscience is no more.</li> <li>• <a href="#">John 16:20</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>But after three and a half days, God breathed life into them, and they stood up! Terror struck all who were staring at them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breathing the breath of life into the church is similar to the vision of the Valley of Dry Bones in <a href="#">Ezekiel 37</a></li> <li>• The resurrection of the church shows that God has the ultimate power over life and death</li> <li>• Terror strikes the world since they cannot stop the church</li> </ul>
<p><b>12</b></p> <p>Then a loud voice from heaven called to the two prophets, "Come up here!" And they rose to heaven in a cloud as their enemies watched.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The triumph of the church is witnessed by all</li> <li>• God calls the church to him in heaven and they go up to heaven in a cloud</li> <li>• This is reminiscent of the disciples watching Jesus go up to heaven, but here it is the enemies of God that see the church triumphant</li> </ul>
<p><b>13</b></p> <p>At the same time there was a terrible earthquake that destroyed a tenth of the city. Seven thousand people died in that earthquake, and everyone else was terrified and gave glory to the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ezekiel 38:17-23</a> God will show His Sovereign Power <a href="#">Zechariah 14:11-21</a></li> <li>• A portion 1/10th are destroyed which results in terror and acknowledging that God is all powerful.</li> </ul>

<p>God of heaven.</p>	
<p><b>14</b></p> <p>The second terror is past, but look, the third terror is coming quickly.</p>	<p>Here the third woe is coming</p>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p>Then <b>the seventh angel blew his trumpet</b>, and there were loud voices shouting in heaven:</p> <p>“The world has now become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ,</p> <p>and he will reign forever and ever.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Here <a href="#">Psalm 2</a> is invoked</li> <li>● The greek tense (aorist) expresses this as an undeniable fact.</li> <li>● Jesus had conquered over Satan’s temptation to receive the world if he worshiped Satan, but now the eternal reign of Christ is proclaimed by all the hosts of heaven!</li> <li>● He shall reign forever and ever!!!</li> </ul>
<p><b>16</b></p> <p>The twenty-four elders sitting on their thrones before God fell with their faces to the ground and worshiped him.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Praise, once again, fills the temple of God and the 24 elders fall with faces on the ground to worship Jesus!</li> <li>● They fall to the ground because they cannot get any lower.</li> </ul>
<p><b>17</b></p> <p>And they said,</p> <p>“We give thanks to you, Lord God, the Almighty,</p> <p>the one who is and who always was,</p> <p>for now you have assumed your great power and have begun to reign.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The victory is so certain that here it is spoken of in the past tense.</li> </ul> <p>“You have assumed your power and begun to reign.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Praise is given and proclaimed</li> </ul>

**18**

The nations were filled with wrath,  
but now the time of your wrath has come.  
It is time to judge the dead  
and reward your servants the prophets,  
as well as your holy people,  
and all who fear your name,  
from the least to the greatest.  
It is time to destroy  
all who have caused destruction on the earth.”

- The victory is secure. Now comes the judgment.
- Contrast the nations wrath and now God's wrath
- Reward to the Holy people of God
- Destruction to all who have been in rebellion against God

**19**

Then, in heaven, the Temple of God was opened and the Ark of his covenant could be seen inside the Temple. Lightning flashed, thunder crashed and roared, and there was an earthquake and a terrible hailstorm.

- We see the abiding presence of God with His people
- We also see the terrible wrath of God from Heaven upon all who stood in defiance against Him.
- God will faithfully carry out His covenant promises and destroy the enemies of His people.