

## Revelation\_11

After John absorbed – digested - the small open book and heard God’s confirmation of his Gospel ministry, our Lord continues His revelation to John. At this point God gives John an instrument and an instruction for its use.

**1]** With this measuring reed – cane – measure God’s temple, the altar and the worshippers. What is this cane? In Ezekiel 40 - 42 we can see detailed measuring of a city, its walls, gates, and the temple. The measurements were done by a reed – a cane. In the Revelation 21 is the vision of the holy Jerusalem. One of the seven angels is showing John the city and the measurements of it are expressed in the numbers of a golden measuring reed. My first thought is that this reed-like cane is the measure revealed to us in God’s ordinances foreshadowing our Redeemer. The golden reed is presented to us in the very Person and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the size of a reed in the “Bible dictionaries” is reliable, we, men, are all undersized in comparison: isn’t this revealing? When we understand and embrace the fact of our imperfection and insufficiency, we fit better into our God’s building. The holy Jerusalem in Revelation 21: 15-17 has been built by our Savior’s Spirit according to His perfect dimensions expressed in our Lord’s perfect terms; that is the golden measuring reed. He knows His redeemed. In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3: 16 we, the Christians, are the temple of our God and His Spirit dwells in this temple. John received the measure and is instructed to apply it to the temple, the altar, and to the worshippers. When we measure ourselves by the perfect example of our Master, we are short, that we may labor & pray to be like Him. Our Father looks at us through the redeeming grace of His Son and to Him we are the Holy Jerusalem, Christ’s beloved Bride. The altar in this temple has been sanctified by the Passover Offering of God’s Own Lamb. As the Offering is perfect, so the altar is the perfect requirement of our Heavenly Father’s divine judgment and grace. In Zachariah 2 the prophet is observing a

marvelous work of our Lord's minister and His angels speaking the words of our God [verse 5]: I [the LORD] will be to her [Jerusalem] a wall of fire roundabout and will be the glory in the midst of her. In the verse 7 God says: Deliver thy-self, o Zion, you that dwell with the daughter of Babylon. John's ministry included measuring as God's indication of His possession under His protection. The wall of fire keeps the forces of evil from harming His people. The wall also indicates separation of the holy seed from the pollutions of the world. We are not prisoners of our Father's grace; we are the grateful children of His covenant. In Romans 12: 1 we are besought to offer up our entire life, soul and body, mind and heart – an offering of gratitude and adoration acceptable to our God in Christ. If we compare ourselves with ourselves, [2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10: 12], we lack understanding. Pride in our carnality is foolishness. Christ is our sufficiency & surety.

**2]** The outer court measure not for it is given to the Gentiles. They will trample the Holy City forty two months. The genuine believers are built into the Holy Temple of our God [1. Peter 2: 5]. Sinners rejecting this grace in Christ, remain outside - in their sins - in spite of hearing the Gospel and accepting some of Christian customs. At the moment the Lord shut the door of Noah's ship, only the souls inside were safe. If anyone remained outside, right next to the closed door, that sinner perished in the flood. Only trusting and obeying the Son, we are the children of our Heavenly Father. No other position is safe. Salvation and life eternal is in Christ alone. In Matthew 1: 17 is beautiful evidence: forty two generations from Abraham until the redemption in Christ. In that entire period of time the faithful are in God's redemption Temple. Many people are called but not chosen. From Abram to David fourteen generations are included in the record of human errors and God's mercy & grace. From David to the destruction of the Judean kingdom we see a nation blossoming under God's protection to become a mighty Theocracy, and later turning away from the Lord of salvation to sin and deadly idolatry. From the captivity to our Lord's ascension we see fourteen generations of helpless people graced by our

mighty God.

Since our God's promise to Abraham, that in his seed the entire humanity will be blessed, we see the mysterious ways of our God's amazing grace and patience rescuing, delivering, restoring, every man calling on our Lord to save him out of Satan's snares although he caused them by inconsistency and foolishness. Satan fails in the end. Wisdom prevails over foolishness. God's promised Redeemer completed His perfect offering and revealed Himself as the King of kings and the Lord of lords – the only Savior. The gentiles are still trampling the outer courts of Christ's Temple. Some are closer to the sanctuary and have learned some parts of the Gospel truth. Sinners that refuse to enter into Christ's saving grace by casting themselves at the feet of our Savior and Lord, keep their gentile citizenship. Every believer claiming salvation in Christ ought to test himself by the measure given to us in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3: 16 and in the first two verses in this chapter, 11. Am I in the Temple, or outside? A very typical characteristic of the entire Revelation book is presented in this chapter 11. Decades & millenniums are framed by a few short words. Just as the temple, altar, worshipers, and the outer court trampled by the gentiles, suddenly appear in the first two verses, more unannounced persons and actions are coming next.

**3&4]** I give unto my two witnesses to prophecy in sackcloth thousand two hundred and sixty days. They are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. "Two witnesses" indicate multi dimensions of our Lord's testimony in this world. Loyalty, grace & courage to testify, are God-given armament. Sackcloth is not an apparel of vanity and pride or reveling in sin and greed. Christ's messengers in this world are humble and brave, wise and modest. In meekness they exalt the crucified, resurrected, and glorified Jesus, God's own Son. Our Father's power is revealed in Christ, and Christ's Spirit is manifested in His faithful messengers. The time of service and suffering is limited – as appointed by our Lord. Appearance and manners of the faithful is in harmony with the

Gospel they proclaim. They live this Gospel daily – not weekly, or monthly or annually. Their daily walk in the Gospel light is an important - vital – characteristic of their ministry to our Lord and Savior. As the two olive trees in Zachariah 4: 11-14 foretell, so our Lord's promise confirms in John 4: 13& 14 and also 7: 37&38: our Lord's Spirit is living in His loyal witnesses and radiating through them. In John 15 our Savior is the vine, His disciples are His branches and our Heavenly Father is the Owner and the Caretaker of His entire fold. Duality of our God's testimony has been presented to us in Numbers 35: 30, and in Deuteronomy 17: 6. Our Lord Jesus reveals to us in John 8: 18 the true depth and solidity of the trustworthy testimony: our Father confirms it. True disciples, beholding our Father's face in Christ, receive the anointing by His Spirit to testify the true Gospel. Abel was alone, but his testimony is dual: God testifies for him. In Mark 6: 7 the Lord sends His disciples by two as His Gospel messengers. In Acts 8: 26-40 Philip is just one man alone, but his witness is mightily confirmed by our Lord's Spirit. Many witnesses can be useless if the main Witness is not our Lord's Spirit. Christ is our all in all. Revelation 1: 20 tell us that the seven candlesticks symbolize seven churches. Chapters 2 and 3 list the names and testimonies of the churches. Among the seven, two have good testimony in serving the Gospel and with our Lord's admonishment and encouragement, they are partakers of our Lord's dual testimony; His twofold witness. Twelve hundred and sixty days indicate the same period of time as forty two months. Days are used to accent that Christ's testimony is our daily walk in the Fellowship of His Spirit. Forty two months correspond to the forty two 'steps' in Israel's journey from Slavery to the Promise Land and to as many generations in Matthew 1: 1-17. The children of the covenant are in the temple to witness to the 'trampling' Gentiles in all the days of Church's ministry – all the time - since Abel until our Savior's return in glory as Lord of lords.

Every soul lifted from death to life by the gentle and mighty power of Christ's Spirit, faces the same enemy that used pharaoh and Jezebel.

**5&6]** If any man will harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth, and devours their enemies. If any man will harm them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven not to rain in the days of their prophecy. They have power to turn waters to blood and to smite the earth by all plagues as often as they will. Again we see a very interesting style of writing. First part of the verse 5 makes clear the consequence of cruelly persecuting our Lord's messengers [Acts 9: 4-6]. Abusing the ministers of Christ is doing evil to those that bring the Message of salvation to their persecutors. Second part of the verse 5 repeats the danger in a stronger tone. Saul of Tarsus in Acts 9 repented and the Lord saved him. Every evildoer refusing our Lord's call to repent must receive God's just reward for sin – death everlasting. We do not find any evidence of the apostles destroying sinners by fire as our Savior says in Luke 9: 51-56, yet the Gospel heralds the judgment and hell fire for sin. The closest resemblance to this fiery condemnation that I can think of as recorded in the Scriptures is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings chapter 1: Elijah, the prophet, pronounced fire that killed two contingents of soldiers and their captains. This tells me that the witnesses in this chapter eleven are empowered by the same Spirit to condemn rebellion. The power to prevent rain is another sign from Elijah's ministry [1<sup>st</sup> Kings 17]. Turning waters to blood reminds me of Exodus 7: 14-21. Our Lord commanded Moses to proclaim this plague against the tyrants in Egypt. We are looking at two epochs of our Lord's testimony: one is deliverance from slavery; the other is judgment of idolatry. The testimonies of Moses and Elijah have been performed by the same twofold witness as the trustworthy testimony in these verses 3-5. The same enemy that opposed our Lord's mighty work in the days of Moses and Elijah, still battles today to keep sinners under his yoke and to turn disciples from the way of salvation in Christ.

**7]** When they completed their testimony, the beast that comes up from the abyss will battle against them, defeat and kill them. In 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 21, Naboth didn't desire his entire family to suffer Jezebel's murder, yet God did not

prevent murderers; but they deserve God's justice before His people & next ten chapters He judges Jezebel. Pharaoh hated Moses but dared not to murder him. A part of Elijah's entire battle was not to die of Jezebel's hand; and, in the end, the Lord took him up in a whirlwind, but Jezebel was devoured by dogs and her entire family perished to confirm our Lord's displeasure against the wickedness. God is mighty to save and to judge. In Acts 6: 8 – 7: 60, Stephen did not ask to be murdered, although he was bravely facing martyrdom. In the chapter 12 James suffered martyrdom to glorify our Lord Jesus and in the following verses our Lord delivered Peter to comfort the disciples and to continue Christ's testimony. In Acts 9: 22-25 Saul, a new disciple, escaped. Our Lord in His grace and power appoints the time and provides for all needs in the ministry He ordained for all Disciples of Christ, our Lord. Before their mission is accomplished, no power of darkness can harm the faithful. Yet they are always relying on their Lord's will and provisions. When facing martyrdom, their victory is in Christ. Moses and Elijah suffered in their ministry. How many prophets suffered persecution, imprisonment and death? Christians suffer adversities... Our Lord Jesus suffered more than any of His faithful witnesses: and His glorious victory is matchless. He imparts His victory to all His faithful disciples: first in their hearts, then in their ministry. Before the world and in the opinion of the persecutors, martyrdom of saints seems like a victory of their wicked intentions; but the true victory is our Lord's. When the evildoers might have believed that Jesus of Nazareth lost the battle and died on the pillar of suffering and shame, He gloriously prevailed over Satan, sin, & death - for us.

**8]** The dead bodies of the two witnesses are out in the street of the great city known as Sodom and Egypt. Our Lord was crucified there. Our Lord was crucified by wicked religious, political, military, and policing powers of the world. Prevailing influences in the world are spiritual and carnal immorality, tyranny, cruel slavery & torture. In the sight of blind sinners the dead bodies of the saints appear as a tragedy for the martyrs, a defeat of Christ.

Wickedness seems to be victorious and permanently established. Evil and darkness seem to reap great rewards. Once again, the Word of God will reveal that the reality is only visible in the light of the Gospel Truth – in Christ.

**9&10]** The entire godless world see martyrs as dead residue of the past. The truth is that they are a testimony of the blessed future in glory. The world is denying them an honorable burial - unaware of prolonging their witness that the Gospel of salvation and the new life in Christ is worthy living and dying for. The joy in darkness is short. The sinful world celebrates death of the saints, unwittingly keeping in its memory the Gospel message of mercy and judgment. The testimony of the saints living in the world is a torture to the earthly minded sinners, their leaders, and teachers. Even if they can rejoice to the end of their time on earth, it's much shorter than eternity. The Gospel testimony in this world is symbolized by three and a half years. Godless rejoicing lasts only three and a half days. The Gospel is the same since Abel's sacrifice till our King's return. Each regime, each tyrant, all societies, have their individual rejoicing but for a short moment; and that is blended with insecurity and anxiety.

**11&12]** After 3 ½ days the Spirit of life from our God entered into them and they stood upon their feet. Great fear fell upon them which saw them. A voice from heaven invited these two up, and they ascended up in a cloud while their enemies beheld them. Our Lord's body was in the "heart of the earth" three days; then He did arise. Christ is the Captain of His redeemed host. They follow Him in their temporal ministry on earth and in ascending up to His eternal glory. These verses: 7-12 deserve much deeper insight and brighter understanding than mine; yet, within the frame of my very limited ability, I desire to share with you some of the many dimensions I see. I prefer not to use historical records in my understanding and interpreting the abundance of revelation in this book. Most of the human evidences seem to be tainted by prejudices and at times intentional twisting of facts. Some of my own observations lead me to think that some historians were

honest and faithful to the real facts. In Acts 20: 18-35 we can imagine that in some regions a generation of faithful disciples was succeeded by some degenerated, nominally religious, blind leaders of the blind followers. That church, or group of churches, was defeated by the beast and spiritually dead. Evil worldly leaders crave to use dead church to exploit the ignorant. At our Lord's appointed time, His Spirit brings some of these dead, misguided believers out of darkness into the light of faith and knowledge of our Savior and Lord. These new disciples bravely witness the Gospel Truth in spite of persecution and martyrdom. A new battle is raging, and our Savior's loyal witnesses ascend to His glory. Godless dictators fear any spiritual awakening, any revival. Nominal – shallow - religious leaders at times fight against any genuine Gospel teaching more than they ever battle against atheism. In the time of my conflict with Communist laws in the country I lived in at that time, one to two young believers were imprisoned per year. Some of them were sentenced worse than notorious criminals. They were accused of being a threat against Communist regime. A few believers in a country populated by twenty plus millions are feared as a serious danger. The two witnesses ascended in a cloud. Our Savior's glory is around and inside of His faithful witnesses. The amazing fact is that some sinners admired the courage of suffering Christians and were moved to trust and obey our Lord. Trusting and obeying our Master is like hearing the voice from Heaven calling us up to a higher step as we journey through adversities into our King's eternal glory that joins our souls to Him more and more.

**13&14]** The same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, seven thousand of men died; the remnant were afraid, and gave glory to the God of Heaven. The second woe is past; the third comes quickly. When a major world power collapsed stricken by our Lord's displeasure, nations of the world trembled. In social, political, and military turmoil, in blood shedding and waves of epidemic diseases many people die just as they lived: in sin or, on the path to glory. I am amazed with my own



observation and the testimonies of some brethren: how many disciples were preserved, and how many sinners cried to our Lord for mercy and salvation. In the verse thirteen, one 10<sup>th</sup> part of the city was destroyed and seven thousand of the people died. Amos 5: 3 told us that 9 parts of the apostate Israel will perish. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 19: 18 God preserved seven thousand. In the # 13 our Lord reversed the numbers. The Revelation is illuminating both, His amazing grace & His divine justice. From Mark 1: 1 to our Lord's ascension salvation grace and sin condemnation is preached - 3 ½ years. From the Acts 2 to the end, Christ is witnessed – 42 months – 1260 days, the fullness of God's grace in Christ. Halleluiah! FATIMA is one of many true stories; a testimony I saved for you. See it after the last chapter of this Revelation. In the verse seven is the record about the beast. It is my habit not to spend much time in exploring the enemy. If Satan is personally in the vision or any of his slaves, I'm just content to know that it's that side: the enemy. Yet in this Revelation some apparently minor details radiate major significance as the visions unfold before our eyes. In the chapter 8, verse 10, a great fallen star polluted one third of rivers and fountains of water. In the chapter 9: 1 the fallen star has the key of the bottomless pit and opens it to release much evil. In the verse 11 the angel of the pit is the king of evil forces. In 17: 8 a beast that was, is not, and yet is, moves from the pit into perdition. The Revelation beams its light all over the Bible. Ever since Genesis 3: 14&15 Satan is falling lower and lower. His distance from Heaven is growing and his final and total perdition comes nearer and nearer. His harmful power over his victims is in his deception and their submission to him. His ascension from the pit is within his darkness. He cannot lift himself above that dust he must eat. He cannot generate a single spark of goodness in his being. His false glory deceives his victims, but cannot bring him a moment away from his wretchedness and his inward torment. He is a defeated adversary. Our King's loyal servants are always victorious. Satan's victory is a mirage.

**12]** The great voice from Heaven is a clear call to the faithful. The enemies

behold our Father's children soar to Heaven; but the sinners are in shackles of their sinful will. One day of my imprisonment I was working alone in the prison hospital lab and assuming that no official was near, I started singing; first softly, but soon accelerated. It was one of those moments when our Lord's presence dispelled the mist of the world around me. Soft singing was tolerated, but my delightful rapture in singing my heart out to our Lord, could be punished. As I worked at the counter, my back was toward the door. One of the highest ranking officials sneaked in unnoticed by me. When I glanced toward the window, I noticed him resting on the window sill; apparently amused. To me it was uncertain if he took pleasure in surprising me, or he liked my singing. Since I was caught in the violation of the rules, I thought it's better to finish my song. He smiled friendly and I returned the smile trusting he was honest. Then he said to me: "Dijon, if I could believe as you do, I would be happier as a prisoner than I am now with my position and income". In our short conversation he quickly retreated to his fortress of sinful habits, but he left me very thankful for that moment of an open testimony to one of the unapproachable. I was happier than he. In the verse 10 the earthly minded men are tormented by our Lord's testimony. If their conscience was not touched, if they were sure there was no truth in the Gospel of justice and mercy, would they be tormented?

If the Gospel testimony did not expose human sin and wickedness, what would annoy the worldly worshippers? Who is more afraid of our Lord's Word and set up against its proclamation, the sinful leaders or their wicked master, the devil? Darkness cannot withstand the Light; but we are sent into the world as Christ's light and salt.

**13]** The great earthquake here reminds us of many past catastrophes and, foretells God's coming judgment. The 7,000 died and the great city was structurally decimated... These numbers are symbolizing our God's order in this world of disorders. Not one less or one more can be lost in calamities, but precisely and only those that rejected God's saving grace. If the city was

populated with millions, 7,000 would be a very small percentage... If only a fraction of a percent perished in the earthquake, how large or, how small is the remnant that in their fear gave glory to the God of Heaven? In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1: 26-31 God has chosen some men despised in this world to give them what the whole world cannot give: grace unto salvation and life eternal in His beloved Son. In Daniel 2: 47 the king in his speech honored the true God, but continued in his godlessness afterward. Saul of Tarsus trembled when he heard our Lord's words, but afterward served our Lord Jesus wholeheartedly. Our Father's justice is awful for sinners, but His mercy and grace is wonderful to all who receive new life in Christ.

**14]** The 2<sup>nd</sup> woe is frightening to the 10<sup>th</sup> part of the city destroyed by the earthquake and to the 7,000 that died. If among the remnant that gave glory to the God of Heaven were some genuine converts to honor God by faith and loyalty, the third woe is not going to endanger them. All who trust and obey His Word are secured in Christ. The day of our Lord comes as a thief in a night to all forgetful hearers and hateful rebels and they cannot escape.

**15]** The 7<sup>th</sup> angel sounds his trumpet. A loud shout fills the heaven: The reign of this world has become our Lord's and His Christ's. He shall reign forever and ever. The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet ends the war started so long ago in Eden. Our Creator ended the creation week with His celebration on the day of peace and joy in the Garden. Now the Heaven vibrates with jubilee: our Savior prevailed with: love over hatred, patience over fury, wisdom over craftiness, calm over hysteria; with His Father's power in Him against Satan's treachery, our Lord is victorious. The ever living Creator laid down His own life and shed His own blood to give life eternal and peace with God to all who trust and obey the Father in the Son. Now the Father and the Son are glorified as the Holy Spirit engulfed all the jubilant members of His body, His purchased possession, forever blessed in His everlasting love-embrace.

**16]** Twenty and four elders on their seats before God fall upon their faces in adoration of God. Their expression of their adoration is colossal; and their praise is a heavenly psalm. Their hearts are like celestial harps in perfect harmony vibrating with admiration, love and gratitude to Him Who was and is & will remain forever triumphant. The essence of eldership is in the very character of our Creator. In our Savior's manners and deeds – as He ministered among us in His own flesh – we see perfect hearty endurance for His and our Father's pleasure. In His submission He is high above all the enemies, above every power of darkness: they all must collapse before Him. Christ reigns in every situation. He is always and forever victorious. The Lamb of God slain from the world's foundation is victorious and has never failed to please our Father. The Lamb, the Son, reigns eternally; in that He is the Elder of elders. Of His own infinite eldership He has distributed to all the elders He has ordained & blessed.

**17&18]** Here are the words of their adoration: We give Thee thanks, o Lord God Almighty since ever and forever, for Thou hast retained Thy great power, and hast reigned. The nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead to be judged, that Thou give reward to Thy servants, prophets & saints, all that honor Thee.

Thou will destroy them that destroy the earth. Beholding our Lord God, the Almighty, and having gratitude, are two inseparable talents. The true eldership, and the shepherds under the great Shepherd, our Lord Jesus, are ordained and blessed by our Lord. Worldly rulers must strive to keep their office in power fearing their enemies. Nothing can ever shake up our Lord's reign in power. He never gave up His power to save the lost and we cannot help but be forever grateful. Nations were angry. The wrath of man is against the righteousness of God. [James 1: 20]. Sinners are angry because God is righteous, merciful, and just. [Genesis 4: 3-13] Evil – sin - is against God. God's wrath withstood sinful wrath. Here, again, the Revelation beams brightly across the Scriptures. God's wrath is manifested in Genesis 3: He condemned evil but He promised redemption. God's condemnation

of idolatry and lawlessness is demonstrated in the entire book of Exodus, many prophetic messages & other books. The wrath of God is not His loss of patience. God never lose any part of His perfect divine character. Our Lord told the first couple that they will die if they eat fruit of the tree. By their transgression they elected death. Jeremiah, the prophet, told God's word to the leaders and the nation of Judah; and consequences of disobeying. The Judeans have chosen to believe the false prophecies and many times experienced their losses in falsehood. They stubbornly disobeyed our Lord until their kingdom and their individual lives were destroyed. In the Bible we find many similar records. God's displeasure is revealed all along the sinful path; and so is His call to repent. Every person persistently walking on the path of disobedience must reach the end of that path in final judgment. Every follower of our Savior is attacked by the evil forces and protected by our Lord's Spirit. Our Lord brings many benefits to His pilgrims. All the faithful reach the end of the way of salvation end enter into eternal glory. The final destruction is just the last part of the sinful way. The eternal glory is the foretold triumph of our King's reign in His people on earth. Our God's mercy and grace is offered to us in Christ unto our salvation and God's honor. His displeasure with sin is manifested and His Judgment foretold to turn our hearts from death - to Life. Since the fall of man in Genesis 3 and until the last line of the Revelation we can see a pattern signifying an important characteristic of our God's divine nature: He never accepts sin and does not reject true repentance of a sinner. He takes upon Himself the judgment for our sin to save us. All who reject His grace remain doomed.

**19]** God's temple is opened in heaven and the ark of His covenant is visible. Lightnings flash, voices and thunders are heard, earthquake happens and great hail falls. This is a marvelous vision at the end of all that happened in this chapter 11. We might consider it as the two sides separated before the Almighty: one side is His covenant. The other side is God's justice and judgment. From the beginning to the end, all who enter into God's

covenant and remain faithful are in His temple. Although they are pilgrims on earth, their life & citizenship are in Heaven. In this world they are despised, oppressed and persecuted. In Christ they are accepted, beloved, and victorious. To the impenitent, stubborn rebels, lightnings of God's displeasure flash, but they squeezed their eye-lids to ignore it. The voices of prophets, faithful witnesses and natural chains of events, all speak and point to that Truth. The rebels killed the prophets, persecuted faithful messengers, hated the Truth and loved their darkness. The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet has sounded: let us pray for His blessing that we grow in the faith and knowledge of God's Son; that we be adorned in His righteousness and holiness. Let us not be discouraged by the unrighteousness and filth in the world of darkness. Let our offering to our Father be our soul and body, mind and heart, all, in His Son.