

The Invincible and Vulnerable

Revelation 11; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 6-26-22

Introduction

Revelation chapter 11 includes two powerful witnesses, a terrible beast and the last trumpet. The chapter is about God preserving His people as they bear witness to the truth in a hostile world, yet not without suffering. It is also about the tribulation that will precede the arrival of heaven on earth (the kingdom of God). It highlights both the invincibility of God's people and their vulnerability. - 1 Corinthians 1:27; 2 Corinthians 12:9

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 11 of Revelation falls in the 'Fig Tree Trumpet Events' section that announce the coming of the Lord and describe the painful transition or Great Tribulation.

- Conception (Genesis 3 Promise)
- Pregnancy (Old Testament)
- Birth Pangs (beginning with the 1st Coming of Christ)
- Transition (the Great Tribulation)
- Final Push and Birth (2nd Coming of Christ)

The Purpose of a Trumpet

The trumpet judgments are a warning to the unbelieving world that they need to repent before the final judgment comes. Chapter 11 of Revelation is an interlude between the 6th and 7th trumpet judgments. It is part of the description of what will be taking place with God's people as God warns the world of impending judgment.

The Interludes

There are two interludes: one between the 6th and 7th Seal and one between the 6th and 7th Trumpet. The point is the encouragement of divine protection and preservation of God's people. Revelation 11 is describing God's protection of His people even as He enables them to call the world to repentance as the 2nd coming of Christ approaches.

The Measurable Temple of God (1-2)

The temple of God is now about a people not a place and about a people that God protects.

- Moving Temples*: The temple of God on earth (where God's presence is manifested and worshiped) is now found in a 'people' not a 'place': individual believers and the Church as a whole.
- Living Sacrifices*: We no longer offer animal sacrifices but we offer ourselves as living sacrifices; not to be forgiven but because we are forgiven. – Romans 12:1-2
- No Pain, No Gain*: God grows His Church and His people through pain and suffering and difficulty. – Isaiah 54:17; Luke 21:12-19

Two Powerful Witnesses (3-6)

At the End, God will speak powerfully to a lost world before the return of Christ.

- Light in the Darkness*: Our testimony shines brightest when it's the darkest.

- *Powerful Testimony (A):* The testimony of the Church will be empowered by the Holy Spirit so that believers can be bold and clear in the proclamation of the gospel in the face of suffering and death.
- *Powerful Testimony (B):* The testimony of the Church before the End will be attended with powerful confirmations of the Truth. – 1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Luke 21:10-11; 25-33; Malachi 4:5-6; Romans 11:5-26; Matthew 17:10-13; Luke 9:28-36

The Apparent Victory of the Beast (7-10)

At the End, it will appear that Satan and the unbelieving world has won and put an end to Christianity.

- *Invincible Testimony:* We are invincible until our testimony is finished.
- *Vulnerable Testimony:* The powers that be will try to destroy the Church and it will appear that they have done so.
- *When Love Torments:* Lovers of darkness are tormented by the light. – John 7:7; Luke 18:1-8

A Very Public Rapture (11-14)

At the End, God will publicly vindicate Christ and His people before a watching world.

- *The Snatching Away:* God will vindicate His people before unbelievers (the ‘not so secret’ rapture). – Matthew 24:29-31
- *The Call to Stay the Course:* We need to be faithful.
- *The Call to Be Strong and Courageous:* We need to endure.

The Joyful Last Trumpet (15-19)

At the End, Christ will return to bring to a consummation the fruit of His finished work and usher in heaven on earth. – 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

A Theology of Suffering

- *Surgical Suffering:* Suffering is the just consequence of man’s sin and the merciful result of God’s goodness. (Lamentations 3:22-23, 38-39)
- *Narrow Lens Suffering:* Jesus came to rid the world of sin and suffering through the greatest suffering of all. (Lamentations 3:31-33; 1 John 3:8b)
- *Expiration Date Suffering:* One day sin and suffering will be gone and there will be heaven on earth. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Psalm 16:11)
- *Return to Sender Suffering:* Now, God uses suffering for good in unbelievers’ lives. (Luke 13:1-9)
- *No Pain No Gain Suffering:* Now, God uses suffering for good in believers’ lives. (Job 42:1-6)