



THE NATIONS RAGE
BUT THE MOST HIGH REIGNS



**NOW THEN, YOU KINGS, ACT WISELY! BE WARNED, YOU RULERS OF THE EARTH!
SERVE THE LORD WITH REVERENT FEAR, AND REJOICE WITH TREMBLING. SUBMIT TO
GOD'S ROYAL SON, OR HE WILL BECOME ANGRY, AND YOU WILL BE DESTROYED IN
THE MIDST OF ALL YOUR ACTIVITIES— FOR HIS ANGER FLARES UP IN AN INSTANT.**

BUT WHAT JOY FOR ALL WHO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM!

(PSALM 2:10-12 NLT)

OUTLINE ... (Revelation 11:1–19 ESV)

1. THE LORD DEMONSTRATES HIS SOVEREIGN REIGN IN THE SALVATION AND CARE OF HIS PEOPLE AND THE CONTINUING WITNESS OF HIS GRACE THROUGHOUT EVERY EPOCH OF EARTH HISTORY, 11:1-3.

- (Revelation 11:1–3 ESV) 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.”

A. The General Principle in Scripture: The Lord demonstrates his sovereign rule in setting apart and saving his people throughout earth history.

Epoch ... a period of time in history or a person's life, typically one marked by notable events or particular characteristics; a particular period of time marked by distinctive features, events, etc.

- (Genesis 12:1–3 ESV) Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that **I will** show you. 2 And **I will** make of you a great nation, and **I will** bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 **I will** bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you **I will** curse, **and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**”
- (Psalm 105:42–43 ESV) **For he remembered his holy promise,** and Abraham, his servant. 43 So he brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with singing.
- (*Find more in Genesis 11, 12, 15, 17*).
- (Genesis 50:20 ESV) As for you, **you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good,** to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.
- (Matthew 25:34 ESV) Then the King will say to those on his right, “**Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.**”
- (Ephesians 1:3–4a ESV) Blessed be the

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world,** that we should be holy and blameless before him.

- (1 Peter 1:3–5 ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 **who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**

B. A Specific Example in our Text: God has John measure and set apart his worshipers from the non-worshipping world surrounding them.

Our Lord does this even during the holocaust of the great tribulation, the time of the devil’s great wrath.

- (Revelation 12:12 ESV) Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, **for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!**”
- (Matthew 24:22 ESV) **And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.**

Our Lord grants authority to two powerful witnesses during the period of the great tribulation.

2. THE LORD DEMONSTRATES HIS SOVEREIGN REIGN AS HE EMPOWERS HIS TWO WITNESSES TO STAND AGAINST A WORLD FILLED WITH DEVILS AND REBELS, 11:4-6.

- (Revelation 11:4–6 ESV) 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.

- A. The key ingredient to these two witnesses is that they stand before the Lord of the earth.
- B. They are supernaturally defended but they would stand for the Lord no matter what.
- C. They are supernaturally empowered but they would stand for the Lord no matter what.

3. THE LORD DEMONSTRATES HIS SOVEREIGN REIGN AS HE PROTECTS HIS TWO WITNESSES AGAINST THE WORLD OF DEVILS AND REBELS UNTIL THEY HAVE FINISHED THEIR TESTIMONY, 11:7-10.

- (Revelation 11:7–10 ESV) **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.

God in his providence—his purposeful sovereignty—sets the table to bring himself glory.

- A. God allows the two witnesses to finish their testimony.
- B. God permits the beast to kill them.
- C. God permits their bodies to be left in the street.
- D. God permits the non-worshippers to celebrate.

The non-worshippers possibly anticipate a turning of the tide in the war against heaven as they defiantly leave the bodies of God’s witnesses in the street and refuse to allow them to be buried as a stark witness to the beast’s triumph over them. Then

A poster that seems to be popular with climate change activists declares:

There is no Planet B

“those who dwell on the earth”—the unsaved, non-worshippers—rejoice over the deaths of God’s witnesses. But their foolish, darkened minds and hearts have blinded them to the terror that awaits them.

- (Romans 1:21–22 ESV) For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools.
- (Ecclesiastes 9:12 ESV) **For man does not know his time**. Like fish that are taken in an evil net, and like birds that are caught in a snare, **so the children of man are snared at an evil time, when it suddenly falls upon them**.

EXCURSUS: A TRUE WITNESS ...

i. A true witness loves the Lord first and foremost.

- (Revelation 2:4–5 ESV) But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. **If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.**

We must understand the significance of this warning. They had fallen away from loving the Lord as they should. They must repent or the Lord would remove their witness.

ii. A true witness stands before the Lord of the earth.

iii. A true witness finishes his/her testimony and endures to the end, even if that end is death.

- (Revelation 12:11 ESV) And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.
- (Revelation 12:17 ESV) Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

iv. A true witness is faithful to the word of God and the testimony of Christ.

- (Revelation 3:8b ESV) I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

v. **A true witness is unyielding in the clarity and truth of the gospel.**

- (Galatians 2:5 NIV) We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.

4. **THE LORD DEMONSTRATES HIS SOVEREIGN REIGN AS HE STUNS THE NON-WORSHIPERS WHEN HE RAISES HIS TWO WITNESSES AND CALLS THEM TO HEAVEN, 11:11-14.**

- (Revelation 11:11-14 ESV) **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.**

5. **THE LORD’S SOVEREIGN, ETERNAL REIGN IS CELEBRATED AND CONFIRMED IN HEAVEN, 11:15-19.**

- (Revelation 11:15-19 ESV) Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.” 16 And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying, “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. 18 **The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.**” 19 Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an

earthquake, and heavy hail.

This blowing of the trumpet seems to be a precursor ... such a powerful preview of things to come that it is as if these things were already happening. The trumpet blows and loud voices confirm the eternal rule of the Lord and of his Christ. The twenty-four elders give thanks for God’s overt assertion that the Most High rules the kingdom of men.

A. **The nations rage but God rules.**

- (Psalm 2:1-12 ESV) Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, 3 **“Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.”** 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. 5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, 6 “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.” 7 I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. 8 Ask of me, and **I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.** 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” 10 Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

B. **He will rule in his judgment of the non-worshippers.**

C. **He will rule in the reward of his servants.**

THE SENTENCE IS BY THE DECREE OF THE WATCHERS, THE DECISION BY THE WORD OF THE HOLY ONES, TO THE END **THAT THE LIVING MAY KNOW THAT THE MOST HIGH RULES THE KINGDOM OF MEN** AND GIVES IT TO WHOM HE WILL AND SETS OVER IT THE LOWLIEST OF MEN.

(DANIEL 4:17 ESV)