

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“The Antichristian Beast”

Revelation 11:7-12

Review

1. According to the divine outline of Revelation (1:19), this chapter is included with the events which shall be “hereafter.” This means the present day of God’s grace has come to an end (chaps. 1-3). The Rapture of the Church has taken place (chaps. 4, 5).
2. The horrendous Tribulation has begun (6:1 - 19:21). For some, the present worsening is a harbinger of the full outpouring of divine wrath on rebellious mankind. Surely things have gotten worse fast! Yet the worst is yet to come.
3. Meanwhile, even in the Great Tribulation stretched over seven years, there are intervals of mercy (7:1-17; 10:1 - 11:14). During the present chapter hiatus of judgment (11:1-14), God reveals how He will take possession of things on the earth: 1) The preparation of a temple (11:1, 2). 2) The designation of a witness during the first half of Daniel’s 70th week (11:3-7a). 3) The destruction of a city (11:2) during the second half of Daniel’s 70th week. All of this is within the Tribulation. 4) The allocation of an antichristian “Beast.” Study the Scriptures to learn how these are all segments of God’s progressive purpose.

1. RISING of BEAST vv 7, 8

Note: The two witnesses (probably Elijah and Moses), dressed in sackcloth for mourning, will prophesy for a prescribed time period (11:3, namely 42 months; 1260 days; 3-1/2 years i.e. the first half of Daniel’s 70th week). Employing an indefinite temporal clause (), the witnesses complete their testimonial. No power on earth, heaven above, or under the earth can touch His own until He allows (cf. Job 2:6). God does not ever lose sovereign control -- even in Tribulation.

a. His Ascending v. 7

So now, when the witnesses have done their work, for the first time in the Book of Revelation, the Antichrist is mentioned under the figure of “Beast” (cf. 13:1; 17:3, 8; 19:19, 20; 20:10). It is openly stated this person comes up out of () the bottomless pit (abyss). This is some horrible infernal place associated with Satan and demons (cf. (:1, 2). It may well be counted with the “Great Gulf” (Luke 16:19-31).

b. His Acting v. 7

1) Warring

The use of the future tense assures the polemics of the beast. He is incessant in his activity of war with the witnesses. The “little horn” (Dan. 7:21) does the same. Their identity with one another is obvious (cf. Dan. 7, 8, 9, 11).

2) Conquering

Again the future tense for “overcome” indicates that victory over the witnesses is assured. It is so affirmed by Daniel (7:21).

3) Killing

This is the final link in the chain begun with the uprising of the Beast -- he will kill the witnesses. How this is done is not revealed here, but it may be by decapitation (cf. 20:4).

Note: All of these activities of the Antichrist having been done, the text describes:

1) The Abandoned Bodies v. 8.

The term used for “dead bodies” refers to a corpse, a body fallen in battle (cf. Mt. 14:12,). They are “fallen” upon a “broad street.” The verb “lie” is italicized not being in the Greek.

2) The Associated City v. 8. It is:

a) The “Great” City. Jerusalem is thus denoted as “The Great” ().

b) The “Spiritual” City. Indefinite relative () specifies the character of Jerusalem. As “Sodom” it is filthy and wicked; as Egypt it is a place of slavery and oppression.

c) The “Crucifixion” City. This provides solid identification for the place of these events. Since “their” bodies are the subject, it may be better to affirm “their Lord” having been crucified there ().

2. RESPONDING of PEOPLE vv. 9, 10

Note: A world-wide situation obtains here. Consider “people, kindreds, tongues, nations” (cf. 10:11). Summarily they are “they that dwell on the earth.” This is a regular formula used in Revelation and refers to those who belong here (cf. 8:13; 12:8, 12, 14; 17:8). What do people whose “home” is earth do about the killing of the witnesses? Scripture tells the story:-

a. They Look

The present tense is at once dramatic and astounding (). Think of it, the masses just look at the dead bodies on the broad street of the spiritually wicked city of Jerusalem where Jesus was crucified.

b. They Refuse

The corpses are not allowed to be placed in a tomb (cf. Mk 5:3). Rather, for 3-1/2 days (same number of years of witness, 11:3), the bodies are exposed and heaped with indignities. This is clearly opposed to Scripture (Deut. 21:22, 23). In any case, the witnesses were really dead albeit unburied.

c. They Rejoice

Three verbs support this fact: 1) Rejoice (present active tense). 2. Make merry (present middle, means to be of a jolly mind). 3. Send gifts. The death of God’s servants elicits exchange of gifts as at Christmas! The sadness of this demonic activity is that the witnesses are “prophets” whom they claim “tormented” the earth dwellers (cf. 9:15).

3. REMOVING of WITNESSES vv. 11, 12

a. Their Resurrection v. 11

Patently, the God of heaven causes life to enter into the witnesses (). They lived again. Corpses came alive! The spirit of life is “from” () God! Life is His prerogative. No wonder it is stated “they stood upon their feet.”

b. Their Observation v. 11

The verb for “saw” is contrasted with “see” (v. 9). Here the word means “to gaze, perceive, discern” (). As the earth dwellers gazed at the resurrection of witnesses, they “feared.” They were stricken with panic.

c. Their Ascension v. 12

A voice from heaven commanded the witnesses (aorist imperative,) to come up here. So they did just that. All the while their enemies gazed at them (same verb as v. 11). It was so with Elijah (2 Kngs 2:11), Christ (Acts 1:9) and will be for us (1 Thess. 4:17).

Conclusion This section begins with the Beast from the pit. Thank God it ends with the God of glory rapturing His own to Heaven. That’s our hope. Is it yours? Oh, flee to Jesus for forgiveness of sin and be sure of the Rapture at any moment.