

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Revelation 9:13-11:19 | Session 15 | An Army of Demons, A Little Book, and Two Witnesses

In the book of Revelation, there are seven pairs of visions given to John. The first pair of visions pertains to events that are taking place in Heaven, and the second part of each pair concerns events taking place on Earth.

We continue with the second vision on Earth, and we will see John's third vision in Heaven and on Earth.

- The First Vision in Heaven (4:1-5:14).
- The First Vision on Earth (6:1-7:8).
- The Second Vision in Heaven (7:9-8:6).
- **The Second Vision on Earth (8:7-11:14)**
- **The Third Vision in Heaven (11:15-19a).**
- **The Third Vision on Earth (11:19b).**

There is so much in the book of Revelation that we do not understand. One might ask, why should we study it? The answer is fairly simple—we want to know the content of the entire council of God. Likewise, all Scripture is profitable. If you only grasp the outline and nothing else as you read this book, at the very least, you will be blessed by knowing that you have read the very words of God and his plan for mankind.

And, if you think you've got it all figured out, don't be dogmatic, because you might be wrong. Be confident in what you know and what you have learned, yet open-minded to look at it again and see if there is anything you may have missed. Are there will be things you overlooked, or got wrong in light of further study? If so, don't be afraid to change your mind.

If the book of Revelation seems confusing, don't be discouraged. Enjoy the journey.

THE SECOND VISION ON EARTH (8:7-11:14) | THE FIRST SIX TRUMPETS

CHAPTER 9:13-21 | THE SIXTH TRUMPET SOUNDS

Chapter 9, verse 13 -

THE SIXTH ANGEL SOUNDED.

And the sixth angel sounded. John's vision of this sixth trumpet unveils more detail than any of the others. No less than thirty-three verses are devoted to describing this trumpet. We will also see in this section the second of three woes (the first woe having been described in 9:1-12 along with the fifth trumpet judgment and the third woe introduced when we get to 11:14).

THE VOICE FROM THE FOUR HORNS OF THE GOLDEN ALTAR.

In our last session, a voice *in the midst* of heaven introduced the first woe and the fifth trumpet. It was the voice of an **angel** (not an eagle).

Now with the sounding of the **sixth angel**, John heard a voice coming from the **four horns of the golden altar which is before God**. A likeness of this altar is mentioned in the Old Testament in Exodus 30:6¹, and it is described as being before the veil leading to the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle where God met with the High Priest². Here, in Heaven, there is no veil.

Verse 14,15 -

THE FOUR ANGELS BOUND IN THE EUPHRATES ARE LOOSED.

The voice instructs the sixth angel to **loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates**.

In a previous session, we commented on fallen angels, described by John as locusts (demons), who were released from the Bottomless Pit in order to inflict pain on mankind for five months during the seven years. We identified these fallen angels as being those who had been incarcerated, ever since Genesis chapter 6, in the bottomless pit. The apostle Peter mentions these fallen angels in 2 Peter 2:4:

“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell³, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.”

This sixth trumpet is judgment for which they (four of them at least) are “reserved” and “**prepared**” or ready. These fallen angels are also mentioned in Jude 6:

“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”

These fallen angels who have been kept in chains are not only being judged, but they are also the executors of God’s judgment of the great day that is unfolding.

THEY ARE PREPARED TO SLAY A THIRD PART OF MEN.

The Euphrates river is near Babylon, and there may be some connection. Regardless, their time has come for which they were **prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year**. They are loosed for about 13 months and will **slay the third part of men** (verses 16-19 explain how they go about killing).

Should we take these four angels literally? Common sense says, yes. However, why they were bound in the Euphrates, I don’t know, nor are we told, but this is their appointed time.

AN ARMY OF TWO HUNDRED MILLION HORSEMEN DESCRIBED.

Verse 16-19 —

These four angels command an army. We are introduced to the **army of the horsemen**. This is no small army of **two hundred thousand thousand**. Or, 200,000,000. John is clear that he **heard the number of them**. There is much speculation about who or what this army could be. Some have said it is China’s military, but China’s army

¹ See also Leviticus 16:12-13

² See notes from Session 8 for a discussion on the elements of the earthly tabernacle being an example, a shadow, and pattern of heavenly things.

³ Not the Lake of Fire as we think of Hell today. Rather, the Greek word is *tartaroo*, which was thought by the Greeks as a subterranean place lower than Hades where divine punishment was meted out. Peter says they are held captive there.

is only a paltry 2.2 million active duty personnel.⁴ Since John was so precise with the number, it is better to look at this army as supernatural beings—not humans. They come with the four angels from below. We don't need to make anything up. This is a massive demonic invasion from the depths of hell onto the earth and it leaves death in its wake.

These demonic horses that John sees are fiery, with **heads of lions** breathing out of their **mouths...fire and smoke and brimstone**, the three things which **killed the third part of men**⁵.

DESPITE THE DEATH OF BILLIONS, THE SURVIVORS DO NOT REPENT.

Verse 20,21 —

With astounding arrogance in the face of this massive death, **the rest of men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not**. Whatever idolatry mankind is involved in during this time, it gives us a list, along with murdering and fornication which are rampant, and that mankind is so jaded by **devils and idols** they will not turn from their wicked evil ways. Notice the passage says, **the rest of the men**, this cannot mean that there are Christians on the earth, for no Christian of any kind worships demons; for these are always evil (1 Corinthians 10:20,21).⁶

CHAPTER 10 | THE LITTLE BOOK AND THE MIGHTY ANGEL | EFFECT AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE SIXTH TRUMPET

ANOTHER ANGEL HOLDING A LITTLE BOOK

Chapter 10:1,2 —

We continue in chapter ten with the effects and consequences of the sixth trumpet, but with additional details. **Another mighty angel**, not one of the trumpet angels. In 9:11 the **angel of the bottomless pit came up from below, enveloped in smoke** (9:2). The angel of 10:1 is **another mighty angel. He comes down from heaven clothed with a cloud**. There may be the temptation to take this *angel to be Christ, since there are some similarities in the description of this angel with the description of Christ in Revelation 1:13-16*. An important rule of interpretation is things that are similar are not not always the same. *This is not Jesus Christ here, since Jesus Christ is not another angel*.

This angel plants his right foot on the **sea** and his left foot **on earth**, which could mean he is proposing to take possession of both the sea and the world to execute more judgment.

THE SEVEN THUNDERS SPEAK

Verses 3,4 —

This *cry* is a shout of power, not distress. It is a roaring cry in which seven more judgments are pronounced. The **seven thunders** sound. What are the **seven thunders**? We can only speculate they are another set of

⁴ According to <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/military-size-by-country>

⁵ Using population figures for the world today, that would equal 2.6 billion people killed.

⁶ E.W. Bullinger. Revelation. P. 333.

seven judgments that will be unleashed on the Earth. What are the judgments? John is instructed not to **write** about them. Why they are **sealed up**, we are not told.

THE TIME OF THE END HAS COME AT THE SOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

Verse 5,6,7 —

The execution of final vengeance by God **that there should be time no longer** that is, no longer delayed. The seventh trumpet by the seventh angel will soon sound, expanding into the seven vials of judgment. What is the **mystery of God** that **should be finished**? They are perhaps the prophecies of the end times He revealed to his **prophets**. Amos 3:7 states, *“But he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets”* concerning the time of Jacob’s trouble.

JOHN IS INSTRUCTED TO TAKE AND EAT THE LITTLE BOOK, WHICH IS BOTH SWEET AND BITTER

Verses 8-11 —

In Hebrew idiom, *to eat* means to receive knowledge. Should we take this literally, i.e., John actually ate the little book? I don’t see why not. Either way, the result is the same. Here’s the point: There is a sweetness in that the prayers of Israel were about to be answered (Revelation 6:10), but bitterness in that awful judgment will be the form of that answer. More study is needed, in that there is no explanation given regarding John’s **prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.**

CHAPTER 11 | THE TWO WITNESSES | EFFECTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE SIXTH TRUMPET

We are continuing with the Second Vision on Earth, which comprises the Six Trumpets but is given to us in three parts.

1. Immediate judgments or plagues.
2. The Mighty Angel and the little book.
3. The Two Witnesses.

JOHN MEASURES THE TEMPLE, ALTAR, AND WORSHIPPERS

Chapter 11:1,2 —

John is given a **reed like unto a rod**; we don’t know by whom. But it’s a **measuring rod**. John is to **measure the temple of God**. The word **temple** is not from the Greek word that means the entire building. Rather, it is the word *Naos*, which means *the holy place*.

There is no temple in Jerusalem today, but there will be a rebuilt temple in operation during the tribulation. There will be some true worshippers of God, including some of the 144,000 sealed with God’s protection.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

But John is not to measure the court outside the temple, which is **given to the Gentiles**. Today, in the dispensation of grace, there is no difference in the body of Christ between Jew and Gentile, but during the

Tribulation, the body of Christ will have been caught up with the Lord. A dispensation of law will be in force, and there will be a separation between Jew and Gentile, and the Gentiles will rule over Jerusalem.

The Times of the Gentiles — This expression is not found in the Old Testament, but is a New Testament phrase only used once by the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 21:24). It refers to the time when Jerusalem will be controlled (Literally, trodden down; trample or crush with feet). The Times of the Gentiles began with the Babylonian Captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, and when the “glory of the Lord” departed from Jerusalem. The prophet Ezekiel describes the Lord’s departure from the city in B.C. 594 (Ezekiel 11:22,23). The dominion that once was Israel’s because the throne of God was in their midst has been taken away and transferred to the Gentiles; even to this day. God has given over His glory to the glory of man (Jeremiah 27:5-9). God’s glory will not be seen again until the Lord Jesus Christ returns in the glory of his power (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 15:8).

The Times of the Gentiles is also interpreted by some to be 42 months during the Tribulation. The interpretation is based on Jesus’ use of the word “trodden” in Luke 21:24, which is also used in Revelation 11:2 to describe the holy city being “tread underfoot for forty-two months.” It is worth considering, although it too has some holes.

My main rebuttal to this is that Jerusalem has been *trodden* down by Gentiles for 2,000 years. What do we do with those years? And, currently, Israel is controlled by the Gentiles in so many ways.

- ◆ The United States has much control over Israel, sending them billions of dollars each year.
- ◆ Jordan still controls the Temple Mount.
- ◆ The United Nations demands that Israel kowtow to their demands.

This interpretation, however, should be considered and more study is in order.

During the seven years, the *Times of the Gentiles* will be evident. There will be great oppression, and God will separate the wheat from the chaff.

TWO POWERFUL WITNESSES (PROPHETS) ARE INTRODUCED

Verse 3 —

And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and their prophesying will coincide with the 42 months of the city of Jerusalem being trampled upon. These two witnesses will proclaim a testimony of God for 1,260 days, which equals 42 months, and 3.5 years.

Which 3.5 years, the first or the last, is not clear, but we can speculate this will be the first half since the Antichrist will exercise absolute rule in the second 3.5 years. If the two witnesses appear in the first half of the seven years, it would show that those years will not be a time of peace.

THE TWO OLIVE TREES AND TWO CANDLESTICKS

Verse 4 —

These two men are described as **the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth**. Zechariah 4:2-14 speaks about two olive trees that are *anointed ones that stand before the Lord of the whole earth*. It seems from the context of the Zechariah passage that their connection to the candlesticks was that they were empowered by the Holy Spirit, symbolized by the olive oil that would have fueled the candlesticks (or lampstands)⁷. They have been standing by in the presence of God for their special purpose.

Here we have the **two olive trees** that represent two individuals. They will be endowed spiritually with great power in the face of Satanic opposition. The greatest question asked about these two men is, “Who are they?” To that, I would say if God had wanted us to know, He would have told us. We know that on the coming day of the tribulation, God will raise up two men whom He will call “**my two witnesses.**” They will exhibit wondrous powers to enable them to carry out the commission He will give them, and the world will hate them for it. Beyond this, there is no more to say about their identity.

THEIR POWER WILL GO UNCHALLENGED

Verses 5,6 —

What are they able to do? They cannot be harmed. Anyone who tries will be **killed**. They have great **power** to inflict judgment, drought for 3.5 years, polluting of waters, and whenever necessary, to **smite the earth with all plagues**. According to Revelation 9:20, all the Seals and Trumpet judgments are called **plagues**. No harm can come to these men during their witness.

THE TWO WITNESSES KILLED BY THE ANTICHRIST

Verses 7 —

Not until their testimony is complete can they be injured or killed. Once they have completed their mission, the **Beast** (Antichrist), **that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them**. Why does the Beast show up in this chapter? We have not yet been introduced to him. And we won't read about the account of the rise of the **Beast** to power until chapter 13. We remember that the book of Revelation is not always sequential or chronological. The events of chapters 12 (our next session) and 13 must have already taken place since the Beast is already on earth.

THE DEAD BODIES OF THE TWO WITNESSES LEFT IN THE STREET FOR THREE DAYS

Verse 8,9 —

And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of Jerusalem (where our Lord was crucified). The reason Jerusalem is referred to as **Sodom and Egypt** is to describe the character and condition of Jerusalem in a spiritual and moral sense. Likewise, both Sodom and Egypt had judgments placed upon them.

TO THE TERROR OF THE CELEBRATING WORLD, THESE MEN COME BACK TO LIFE

Verses 10-13 —

⁷ Walvoord, John F. “Revelation.” The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures, edited by J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, Victor Books, 1985.

We realize in the 21st century how the entire world will see **their dead bodies...and rejoice over** their death. But the celebrations and parties will be short-lived, for in just three and a half days, these men, who had been left in the street to rot, will rise to their feet. Everyone seeing it will be filled with dread and **great fear. Like** the Lord after His resurrection, these men will ascend **to heaven...and their enemies beheld them.**

A great earthquake followed. And the **glory they gave to the God of heaven** is not a statement of these people praising God as worship and belief, but it is likely the way people turn to God in an emergency, and make an acknowledgment of Him, but I don't think this is a saving belief (as we will see later). It is more like king Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel, who simply acknowledged another god.

THE SECOND WOE IS OVER, THE THIRD QUICKLY FOLLOWS

Verse 14 —

The **second woe** comprised the four angels loosed as horsemen from the Euphrates, their army, and their armies and the Two Witnesses.

The third woe to come results from an angel sounding the seventh trumpet.

THE THIRD VISION IN HEAVEN (11:15-19A)

TRUMPET SEVEN FAST FORWARDS TO THE COMING REIGN OF JESUS CHRIST

Verse 15 —

The sounding of the Seventh Trumpet takes us back to Heaven, to the third vision seen there by John. This trumpet comprises all the seven Vials, or the last seven judgments, which make up the third woe.

The seventh trumpet is **sounded** from Heaven. Don't mistake this as the trumpet in 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Notice it is not called the *last trumpet*, for there will be another trumpet sounding before the return of the Lord (Matthew 24:30,31). Other notable trumpets are in 1 Corinthians 15:51,52, and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

But this trumpet is the last in this series of seven, and it produces much activity in Heaven and introduces the second coming of our Lord and it is looking forward to the close of the whole book of Revelation. When the 7th trumpet sounds, **great voices in Heaven**, speak of the **kingdoms of this world, becoming of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.** The kingdom of our Lord is not from this world. It is not built or established by man. There is no kingdom today. The kingdom is future, and it is physical, and promised to Israel.

THE HEAVENLY BEINGS WORSHIP GOD AND THE RIGHTEOUS DEAD ARE JUDGED AND REWARDED

Verse 16-18—

The last two great witnesses of God have finished their testimony. Now, all further testimony is withdrawn, and **God's wrath** will take its course. We see a preview here, with **the dead** being **judged**. A future picture of the Judgment is given in chapter 20, which is (for the Jewish nation) the first resurrection. Three groups are involved in this resurrection:

1. God's **servants; the prophets** (Old Testament era).

2. The **Saints** (Jewish believers from the *call of Abraham* to the end of the Kingdom offer).
3. Those who **fear thy name** (Dead believers of the Tribulation).

The dead in Christ are not included since they have been previously resurrected, 1 Thessalonians 4.

THE THIRD VISION IN HEAVEN AND THIRD VISION EARTH (11:19)

ANOTHER GLIMPSE INSIDE THE HEAVENLY TEMPLE AND EVENTS ON EARTH

Verse 19—

Heaven: And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.

Earth: And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

The temple of God was opened. Revelation is the book of *revealing or opening*. There are seven openings in the book.

1. A *Door* is opened in heaven (4:1).
2. The *Seals* are opened (6:1-9).
3. The *Abyss* is opened (9:2).
4. **The Temple of God is opened (11:19).**
5. The *Tabernacle* of Testimony is opened (15:5).
6. *Heaven* is opened (19:11).
7. The *Books* of judgment are opened (20:12).

This is the shortest vision, but it anticipates the end of the book. Seven more judgments are coming from seven **vials** poured out upon the earth. They follow the seventh trumpet, but not before John sees several more visions in chapters 12,13,14 and 15.

Next time, we will see John's fourth vision in Heaven and **a great sign**.