

Session 7: Prophetic Ministry in the End Times (Rev. 10-11)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Revelation 10:1-11:13 is an angelic explanation, or a parenthetical section, that follows immediately after the worldwide crisis described in Revelation 9. In this crisis, demons will kill one-third of the earth, leaving multitudes in confusion and filled with deception. There will be more demonized people on earth than any time in history as the earth is dominated by these four primary spiritual strongholds in society: murder, sorcery, immorality, and theft (Rev. 9:21).
- ²⁰ The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent ... that they should not worship demons ... ²¹ And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. (Rev. 9:20-21)*
- B. There will be many false signs (Rev. 13:13; 16:14; 18:23; 19:20; Mt. 24:24; 2 Thes. 2:8-9).
- ⁴ Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵ Many will come ... and will deceive many ... ¹¹ Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. (Mt. 24:4-5, 11, 24)*
- C. Parenthetical sections, or angelic explanations, follow the chronological sections to answer the tough questions such as “What will happen to the saints?” during the time of crisis.
- D. In Revelation 10:1-11:13, God assures His people that He will release prophetic direction and great power to them. They will understand God’s heart and plans. The saints will prevail against deception at that time. The events in this section cover the final 3½ years of this age.
1. In Revelation 10, God promised to raise up prophetic messengers. These forerunners will bring understanding to help people avoid deception. This passage is important for forerunner messengers to study.
 2. In Revelation 11, the two witnesses preach with great power and release God’s judgments against the Antichrist’s systems during the final 3½ years of this age.
- E. This will be the Church’s most glorious hour in history! Joel prophesied of the greatest outpouring of the Spirit in the end times (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17-21; Eph. 4:11-13; Rev. 11:10, 18; 16:6; 18:20, 24). All the saints will receive dreams, visions, angelic visitations, etc. This outpouring will be manifest in many ways on international, national, and regional levels.
- ²⁸ I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy ... ²⁹ On My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit ... ³⁰ I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and smoke...³¹ before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord ...³² whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Joel 2:28-32)*

- F. The Lord released a down payment of Joel's prophecy on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16). However, it was not completely fulfilled in Peter's generation. For example, the signs such as the sun and moon growing dark with blood, fire, and smoke did not occur. In Acts 2, the Spirit only rested on 120 believers in one city. The fullness of Joel's prophecy requires a global dimension.
- G. One of the greatest needs in the end times will be the need for prophetic understanding (Jer. 23:20; 30:24; Dan. 11:33-35; 12:3, 9-10; Joel 2:28-29; Mal. 4:5; Mt. 17:11; Acts 2:17-18; Rev. 11:3-6; 3:18; 13:18; 17:9; plus Isa. 28:19-23; 43:18-20; Dan. 9:22). There will be much mocking and deception at that time (Mt. 24:4-5, 11, 24; 2 Pet. 3:3; Jude 17-18; Isa. 28:22).

³³ Those of the people who understand shall instruct many ... ³⁵ And some of those of understanding shall fall [martyrdom], to refine them [believers], purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time. (Dan. 11:33-35)

II. THE GLORY OF THE ANGEL (REV. 10:1-3): THE FORERUNNER ANOINTING

¹ I saw another mighty angel...clothed with a cloud. A rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. ² He had a little book open in his hand. He set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, ³ and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. (Rev. 10:1-3)

- A. The angel's authority prophetically pictures aspects of the glory released on God's messengers.
1. Mighty angel: forerunners will operate in the power of the Holy Spirit.
 2. Robed in a cloud of glory: forerunners will experience God's Shekinah glory.
 3. Rainbow around his head: forerunners will emphasize God's promises and mercy.
 4. Face shines like the sun: forerunners will receive God's might in their inner man (Eph. 3:17).
 5. Feet are like pillars of fire: forerunners will release God's holy judgment to establish love.
 6. Feet on the sea and land: forerunners will take possession of their inheritance across the earth.
 7. Cries out like a roaring lion: forerunners will pray and prophesy in the boldness of a lion.
- B. John saw three mighty angels in Revelation with great brilliance (Rev. 5:2; 10:1; 18:2).

III. END-TIME FORERUNNER MESSENGERS: SEVEN THUNDERS PROPHETS

² He [mighty angel] had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land ... ³ When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices [messages]. ⁴ When the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice ... saying, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them." (Rev. 10:2-4)

- A. This little open book is not the same as the Father's book taken by Jesus (Rev. 5:7). The little book contains only part of the prophetic information contained in the Father's book.

- B. An open book reveals that the contents in it are knowable. The angel probably read its contents to release the seven thunders. John understood the seven prophetic messages enough to be able to write them. However, he was told to seal them until the end times. This indicates that the seven prophetic messages in the little book would not be made known until the end times. This was similar to what happened to Daniel earlier when he sealed up his prophecies (Dan. 12:4, 9)
- ⁴ Daniel ... seal the book until the time of the end ... ⁷ He [angel] held up his right hand ... and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time [3½ years] ... ⁹ For the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end ... ¹⁰ None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise [forerunners] shall understand. (Dan. 12:4-10)*
- C. When a book is “opened,” it implies that its prophetic information is being made known in widespread way. When it is “sealed,” it implies that its information is kept private until later.
- D. Daniel 10-12 is a parallel passage to Revelation 10-13. Daniel sealed up prophetic information with an angel of similar glory with a similar oath related to the same 3½ years (Dan. 12:4-10).
- E. It is possible that the prophetic book that Daniel sealed was now being opened to John. If that is true, then the remainder of the book of Revelation (Rev. 11-22) is the contents of Daniel’s book. In other words, the book that Daniel sealed is now being made known to John.
- F. Some see the seven thunders instead of Revelation 11-22 as the contents of what was written in Daniel’s book. If that were so, it seems that the angel would have roared the contents instead of the thunders voicing it. Either way, God wants us to know that there is prophetic information that He will reveal in the end times as His people seek Him for it, as John and Daniel did.

IV. THE END-TIME RELEASE OF THE SEVEN THUNDER MESSENGERS

⁵ The angel whom I saw ... raised up his hand to heaven ⁶ and swore by Him who lives forever and ever ... that there should be delay no longer, ⁷ but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished (Rev. 10:5-7)

- A. The angel swore by God’s Person (eternity, sovereignty): God will show His sovereign power
- B. No more delay: the second coming is the next in the chronological section (Rev. 11:15).
- C. The mystery of God finished: Jesus will rule the earth with His people (Dan. 7:13-27)
- D. During the days of the sounding of the seventh angel: the thirty-day period in which Jesus’ second coming procession and the release of the seven bowl judgments come to completion.
- E. For the thirty-day time frame, compare the days signified in Revelation 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5; and Daniel 7:25; 12:7, 11. The angel will be “about to sound” the trumpet near the end of the Great Tribulation.

V. THE MANDATORY PREPARATION FOR THE END-TIME MESSENGERS

⁸ *The voice which I heard from heaven ... said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel ..."* ⁹ *"I went to the angel and said, "Give me the little book." And he said to me, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth."¹⁰ Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter."¹¹ And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings." (Rev. 10:8-11)*

- A. John eating the scroll as Ezekiel did (Ezek. 2:10-3:3) is a prototype for end-time messengers. The principle being taught is that we must take time to digest God's revelation of the end-time.
¹ *"Son of man...eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel."² So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll.³ He said, "Son of man, feed ... and fill your stomach with this scroll ..."⁴ He said, "Go to Israel and speak with My words to them." (Ezek. 3:1-4)*
- B. John had to eat the prophecy that remained of the book of Revelation. This is probably what Daniel saw and was told to seal. John sees the book open and eats it, then makes it known. The essence of what John saw was the Beast (Rev. 11-13) that Daniel prophesied about (Dan. 7-12).
- C. Daniel and John had unusual revelation in the context of their unusual devotion to the Word from their youth. Daniel modeled fasting, praying, and studying (Dan. 9:20-22; 10:1-13).
- D. **Sweet:** message of victory, salvation, and justice with deliverance to the oppressed worldwide.
Bitter: message of judgment worldwide that brings persecution to the messengers (Lk. 19:41).
- E. **Must prophesy:** God only releases His full purposes as His people prophesy them (Jer. 1:12-13).

VI. THE TWO WITNESSES (REV. 11)

- A. The two witnesses are prophets functioning and confronting the Antichrist on a global level. The worldwide prayer movement will support the prophetic intercession of the two witnesses. Each region will receive God's glory or the Antichrist's pressure, according to the measure of intercession that is in agreement with these two prophets leading the end-time prayer movement.
- B. The paradox in the Tribulation temple (Rev. 11:1-2). This is surprising yet very significant.
¹ *I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there."² But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles." (Rev. 11:1-2)*
- C. The Tribulation temple will be built by unbelieving Jews and desecrated by the Antichrist (Mt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2; 13:12-18; Dan. 8:13; 9:26, 27; 11:31, 36-37; 12:11). This temple is referred to in Scripture as the temple of God (2 Thes. 2:3-4; Rev. 11:1). It is not the same as the millennial temple to be built by Jesus (Ezek. 37:26-28; 40-48; Isa. 2:3; 60:13; Jer. 33:18; Joel 3:18; Mic. 4:2; Hab. 2:20; Hag. 2:7-9; Zech. 6:12-15; 14:16-21; Mal. 3:1-3).

- D. The Antichrist will desecrate the temple (abomination of desolation) by claiming to be God.
¹⁵ *When you see the “Abomination of Desolation,” spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place ... ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. (Mt. 24:15-16)*
³ *The son of perdition [Antichrist], ⁴ who ... exalts himself above all that is called God ... so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (2 Thes. 2:3-4)*
- E. We are to measure the temple, altar, and its worshipers. To measure means to carefully evaluate. The word measure is used in context to evaluating people’s actions (Mt. 7:2).
- F. Amos had a plumb line in his hand to measure the purity of Israel. We are to measure the purity and purpose of God with its complexities in the temple, altar, and its worshipers. It will require spiritual discernment.
⁸ *The LORD said, “Amos, what do you see?” I said, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said: “Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel ... ” (Amos 7:8)*
- G. We are to measure, or weigh carefully, and think through the different issues related to what the God-fearing Jews will do in Jerusalem in the end times. This will require receiving insight from God into the paradoxes and tensions involved in the temple.
- H. God-fearing Jews will be involved in God’s purposes in some of the temple activities before they are saved. We are not to dismiss all their activities in the temple as worthless, but neither are we to see them as being saved until they come to Jesus. There will be a continuum between temple activities, the salvation of the 144,000, and the later salvation of all Israel (Rom. 11:26).
- I. God-fearing Jews not yet saved will in some ways parallel the God-fearing Gentiles in Acts. The temptation of some will be to quickly criticize, and the temptation of others will be to rejoice as if all that they do is good. This command to measure the temple is part of John’s commission to prophesy, which involves establishing understanding for God’s people (Rev. 10:11).

VII. JERUSALEM WILL BE TRAMPLED FOR 3½ YEARS (REV. 11:2B)

- ² *The court...been given to the Gentiles. They will tread the holy city underfoot for 42 months. (Rev. 11:2)*
- A. The events in Revelation 11:1-2a may happen a few years before the trampling of Jerusalem begins in the severity described in Revelation 11:2b. At first, all will seem right with the temple.
- B. Jesus prophesied that Jerusalem would be surrounded in the end times, as seen in part in AD 70.
²⁰ *When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. ²¹ Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains ... ²⁴ They will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles. (Lk. 21:20-24)*

- C. Tread the city underfoot: to be trodden underfoot is symbolic of being totally conquered and even crushed to the ground. Grapes were trodden underfoot (Judges 9:27; Isa. 16:10; 63:2). This speaks of Jerusalem's total defeat under the reign of the Antichrist and his ten-nation empire.
- ³ *It shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples ... though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. (Zech. 12:3)*
- ¹ *The day of the LORD is coming ... ² I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken ... half of the city shall go into captivity. (Zech. 14:1-2)*
- D. It will be given to the Gentiles: this will happen in the most complete way under the oppression of the Antichrist. However, Jerusalem has been under the oppression of Gentiles throughout history, starting when the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70. In AD 637, the Arabs under Omar conquered Jerusalem, and the Dome of the Rock, or Mosque of Omar, was built on the temple site. It remains to this day. This is an important place of worship for Muslims.
- E. Jerusalem is called the holy city, because it was the only city the Lord placed His name and glory upon. It is the city in which Jesus was crucified and resurrected and will return to rule from.
- F. Times of the Gentiles and fullness of the Gentiles: times of the Gentiles pertains to the domination of Jerusalem by Gentile power (Lk. 21:20-24), which began when Nebuchadnezzar totally conquered Jerusalem in 587 BC. This period ends at the second coming. Paul spoke of the fullness of the Gentiles, which means the fullness of their salvation (Rom. 11:25).
- G. The forty-two months is the same 3½ year time frame as the 1,260 days (Rev. 11:3; 12:6); the times, time, and half a time (Rev. 12:14); and forty-two months (Rev. 13:5). There is no reason to interpret these numbers as symbolic.
- H. There are eight Scriptures and four different phrases that describe the final 3½ years before Jesus' return: 1,260 days (Rev. 11:3; 12:6); forty months (Rev. 11:2; 13:5); and time, times and half a time (Rev. 12:14; Dan. 7:25; 12:7). Different terminology is used so that the meaning is clear and that no one would be able to dismiss this significant prophetic time frame as symbolic.

VIII. THE TWO WITNESSES (REV. 11:3-6, 10)

³ I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth. ⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. ⁵ If anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. ⁶ These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire ... ¹⁰ These two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. (Rev. 11:3-6, 10)

- A. The two witnesses release end-time judgments by prophetic decrees like Moses. The plagues of Egypt are the prototype of the end-time judgments (Ex. 7-12) released by intercession (Rev. 8-9; 16). The confrontation between Moses and the Pharaoh gives us insight into the confrontation between the two witnesses and the Antichrist and the False Prophet.
- B. These are miracles done by Elijah and Moses, and the teamwork of Moses and Aaron will be seen in the miracles of the two witnesses. The OT prophets believed that the miracles of Egypt would occur in the end times (Mic. 7:15; Isa. 10:22-25; 11:12-16; 30:30; Jer. 16:14-15; 23:7-8; Ezek. 38:22; Joel 2:30).
- C. The two witnesses will probably supernaturally provide food in the wilderness like Moses and Elijah did. In Revelation 12:13-17, there is food supernaturally provided in the wilderness.
- D. They will release fire through the words of their mouths (v. 5). When King Ahaziah came to Elijah, he called fire down on them (2 Kings 1:10-12). The False Prophet will call down fire. ¹³ He [the False Prophet] performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. (Rev. 13:13)
- E. The two witnesses will be killed and then raised from dead before all the nations. ⁷ When they finish their testimony, the Beast [Antichrist] ... will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. ⁸ Their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city [Jerusalem] which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. ⁹ Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. ¹⁰ Those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ After the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them ... ¹² They ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. ¹³ In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell ... seven thousand men were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven. (Rev. 11:7-13)
- F. The nations will rejoice at their death to the degree they rage against Jesus taking them over. They will see the two witnesses as those who tormented them. The nations rejoiced at the death of Hitler as an oppressor; in a far greater way, they will rejoice at the death of the two witnesses.

- G. The two witnesses are raised after they ministered 1,260 days. The earthquake here is not the same earthquake as seen in Zechariah 14:4, which will open a way of escape for the besieged Jews in Jerusalem. In Zechariah 14, after the earthquake, Jesus comes with all His saints to fully defeat the forces of the Antichrist.

¹¹ Now after the three-and-a-half days, the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet ... ¹² and they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. ¹³ In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand men were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven. (Rev. 11:11-13)

⁴ In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives ... The Mount of Olives shall be split in two ... making a very large valley ... ⁵ Then you shall flee through My mountain valley ... thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You. (Zech. 14:4-5)

¹⁸ There was ... a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. ¹⁹ The great city [Jerusalem] was divided into three parts. (Rev. 16:18-19)