

Home Groups

April 18, 2018



Revelation Chapters 10 - 11: I Need A Witness

Some books in the Bible are confusing and the book of Revelation would rank as one of the most confusing. And if Revelation is a confusing book then chapter 11 ranks as one of the most confusing chapters in this admittedly confusing last book of the Bible.

Nothing in the book of Revelation should be taken literally. Not the six winged creatures, not the lamb with seven horns and seven eyes, not the Four Horsemen of The Apocalypse and not the two witnesses or three and a half years of chapter 11. These are all symbols of spiritual realities throughout history, in the time of John's vision and true for our day as well.

We are reminded that Jesus said that He

will "build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18). With this understanding we see the Church depicted as two witnesses in the spirit and power of Moses and Elijah.

KEY POINTS

1. The Gospel is sweet to those who receive it but to the systems, empires and idol worshippers who reject it it is sour .
2. The Church calls the Church and the world to repentance.
3. We are in uncharted waters as to how best to witness in this world.

Bible Study Questions

Revelation 10 & 11

1. Revelation 10 portrays the image of John receiving a scroll from an angel who stands with one foot on the sea and one foot on the land. He is told to eat the scroll

"I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour."¹¹ Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."
(Revelation 10:18-19)

In ways is the Gospel "sweet" and "sour" to peoples, nations and kings?

2. The "temple of God" in 11:1 is not a literal temple (past or future) but an allusion to the people of God (the Church) in whom the Holy Spirit lives. (1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Peter 2:5). Standing in the midst of the Temple the two witnesses call people to repentance.

What are the historical sins of the church?

What does the church (the people of God) need to repent of?

3. The two witnesses testify for 3 ½ years (a partial time in history) and then are killed for 3 ½ days (a partial time of death).

How does the church suffer persecution?

Where in the world is persecution of the church most prevalent?

What does the death and resurrection of the two witnesses indicate?

4. Moses and Elijah along with Ezekiel are some of the prophets referenced in chapter 11.

Discuss why John uses the images of these particular prophets.

5. The earthquake at the end of chapter 11 is only partial (as compared to other Old Testament references).

What does this indicate about God's mercy?

What does it mean that "God reverses the curse?"



Personal Application Questions

Please answer the questions below as they best apply to you personally. Speak in the “I”. There is no obligation to answer any question.

1. What part of chapter 11 speaks most personally to you?

2. What opportunities do you have to witness? What are your biggest challenges to sharing your faith in Christ with non-believers?

3. Discuss the complexities we face in this world.

When you see how the world is changing in regards to morals, values, sexuality, marriage, violence, etc., how does the Church best witness in these “unchartered waters?”

4. What “prophetic word” does John give to the churches about the ultimate demise of the “kings” and “empires” of this world?

How would you describe how the Reign of God will be ushered into the culmination of this church age? (by what means?...)

5. In 1960 Africa, Asia and South America had 29% of the Christian population. Today, those three continents boast of over 80%. What do you think has happened to the decline of the Christian faith in North America? What needs to change?

Revelation 10&11

¹ Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars. ² He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, ³ and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion. When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke. ⁴ And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down."

⁵ Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. ⁶ And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, "There will be no more delay! ⁷ But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."

⁸ Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me once more: "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land."

⁹ So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take it and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but 'in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey.'" ¹⁰ I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour. ¹¹ Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."

Revelation 10

1 I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, “Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshipers. ² But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months. ³ And I will appoint my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.” ⁴ They are “the two olive trees” and the two lampstands, and “they stand before the Lord of the earth.” ⁵ If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. ⁶ They have power to shut up the heavens so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

⁷ Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them. ⁸ Their bodies will lie in the public square of the great city—which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt—where also their Lord was crucified. ⁹ For three and a half days some from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial. ¹⁰ The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth.

¹¹ But after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck 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, while their enemies looked on.

¹³ At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴ The second woe has passed; the third woe is coming soon.

Revelation 11:1-14