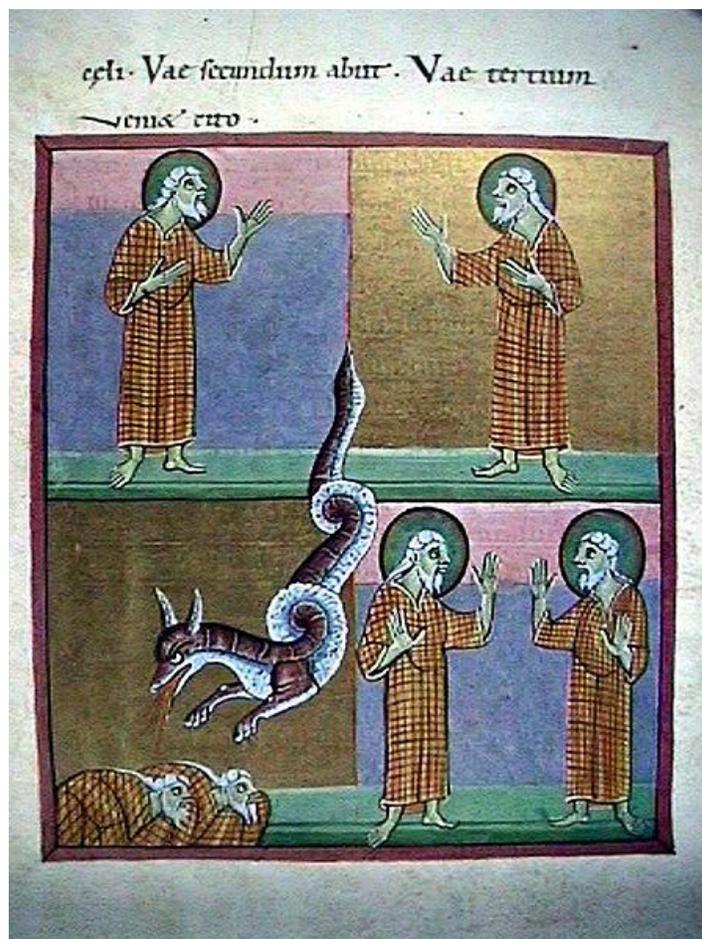


THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Interlude: The Temple and the Two Witnesses (11.1-6)



Review From Last Week (Revelation 10.1-11)

1. Idolatry and Judgment
 - a. The Demonic Deception of Idolatry (Deut 32.15-18; Jer 7.5-11; Ps 115.1-8; John 8.31, 43-47)
 - b. God's judgment ("God gave them up" – Rom 1.18-32)
2. Revelation 10-11: Interlude on the location and mission of the church in the midst of the trumpeted judgments
3. Another Mighty Angel (Rev 10.1-3a) – "angelic theophany" (cf. Ex 3.2-6; 13.20-21; 14.19-31; 24.15-18; Ezek 1.26-28; Rev 1.12-16; 4.3)
4. The Little Scroll (cf. Rev 5.1-2; Dan 12.4-9; Ezek 2.9-10)

- a. The scroll in Revelation 5 contains the account of how God's name is hallowed, how his kingdom comes, and how his will is done on earth as it is heaven. It contains God's judicial and redemptive plan for history, especially in the last days, which have been inaugurated by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - b. The scroll in Revelation 10 reveals the location and mission of God's people in the God's sovereign plan for history.
5. The Seven Thunders (Ps 29; Deut 29.29; 1 Tim 1.3-5; 2 Tim 2.22-26)
 6. No More Delay (Rev 10.5-7 – cf. Rev 6.9-11; Dan 12.4-9; Rom 16.25-26)
 7. Take and Eat (Rev 10.8-11 – the call to prophetic ministry; cf. Jer 15.16-17; Ezek 2.1-3.15; Matt 28.18-20; John 16.7-13; 20.21-23; Rom 16.25-26)

Revelation 11.1-10

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.

³And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."⁴ 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.

⁷And 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.

1. **Measuring the Temple:** 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.
 - a. OT background: Ezekiel 8-10; 40-48; Zech 2.1-5; 4.1-14
 - i. Measuring the temple signifies the security of God's sanctifying presence (the eschatological prophesies of Zechariah and Ezekiel are already being fulfilled in the church)

Zechariah 2.1-5 And I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand!² Then I said, "Where are you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length."³ And behold, the angel who talked with me came

forward, and another angel came forward to meet him⁴ and said to him, “Run, say to that young man, ‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, because of the multitude of people and livestock in it.’⁵ And I will be to her a wall of fire all around, declares the LORD, and I will be the glory in her midst.”

Ezekiel 43.1-7: Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing east.² And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. And the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with his glory.³ And the vision I saw was just like the vision that I had seen when he came to destroy the city, and just like the vision that I had seen by the Chebar canal. And I fell on my face.⁴ As the glory of the LORD entered the temple by the gate facing east,⁵ the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple.⁶ While the man was standing beside me, I heard one speaking to me out of the temple,⁷ and he said to me, “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel forever. And the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name.

b. NT context

i. Jesus as the temple

John 1.14: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 2.18-22: So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?”¹⁹ Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”²⁰ The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?”²¹ But he was speaking about the temple of his body.²² When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

John 7.37-39: On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”³⁹ Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

ii. The church as the temple

1 Corinthians 3.16-17: Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?¹⁷ If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.

2 Corinthians 6.14-18: Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?¹⁵ What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?¹⁶ What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.¹⁷ Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you,¹⁸ and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”

Ephesians 2.17-22: And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

c. Revelation context

i. Jesus as the temple (Rev 1.12-16)

ii. The church as the temple (Rev 3.12; Rev 21.1-22.5 – measured in 21.15-17)

Revelation 3.12: The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

d. “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”

i. 42 (encampments [Num 33.5-49]; generations from Abraham to Jesus [Matt 1]; period of Elijah’s draught [James 5.12; Luke 4.25])

ii. 2 months = 1260 days = time, times, and half a time = three and half years

Daniel 7.25-27: He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. ²⁶ But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. ²⁷ And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Revelation 11.3: And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth

Revelation 12.5: She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, ⁶ and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

Revelation 12.14: But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time.

Revelation 13.5-8: And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. ⁶ It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. ⁷ Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, ⁸ and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

iii. Trampling of the outer court = physical, economic, social, etc. tribulation

2. **The Two Witnesses:** And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.” ⁴ 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. “Two witnesses” – legal testimony (cf. Num 35.50; Deut 17.6; 19.15; 2 Cor 13.1; 1 Tim 5.19; Heb 10.28)

b. “clothed in sackcloth” – prophecy, petition, and penitence

Isaiah 20.1-2: In the year that the commander in chief, who was sent by Sargon the king of Assyria, came to Ashdod and fought against it and captured it--² at that time the LORD spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, “Go, and loose the sackcloth from your waist and take off your sandals from your feet,” and he did so, walking naked and barefoot. (cf. 2 Kings 1.8; Mark 1.6)

Daniel 9.3: Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

Jonah 3.4-10: Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”⁵ And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.⁶ The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.⁷ And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water,⁸ but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.⁹ Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.”¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

Isaiah 66.1-2: Thus says the LORD: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest?² All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

c. “two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth” (priests and kings called to prophetic witness, with the assurance of God’s abiding presence by his Spirit)

Zechariah 4.1 And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep.² And he said to me, “What do you see?” I said, “I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it.³ And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.”⁴ And I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?”⁵ Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.”⁶ Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.⁷ Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’”

⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,⁹ “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you.¹⁰ For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.

“These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range through the whole earth.”¹¹ Then I said to him, “What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?”¹² And a second time I answered and said to him, “What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?”¹³ He said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.”¹⁴ Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

- i. Two lampstands = Smyrna and Philadelphia
- ii. The power of the Spirit

Acts 1.4-8:⁴ And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me;⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”⁶ So when they had

come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”⁷ He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Joel 2.28-32: “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.²⁹ Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.³⁰ “And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke.³¹ The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.³² And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. (Cf. Acts 2)

d. Moses and Elijah (cf. 1 Kings 18.1ff; Ex 7.17-25; cf. Jer 5.14 – re: fire)

e. The Prophetic Calling of the Church

John 12.36-50: While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.³⁷ Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him,³⁸ so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”³⁹ Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said,⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.”⁴¹ Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him.⁴² Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue;⁴³ for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.⁴⁴ And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me.⁴⁵ And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.⁴⁶ I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.⁴⁷ If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.⁴⁸ The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.⁴⁹ For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment-- what to say and what to speak.⁵⁰ And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

John 16.7-13: Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me;¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;¹¹ concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.¹² “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.