

“The Seventh Trumpet (Chap. 10:1 - 11:19)”

NOTES ON 10:1-11:19

1. Just as there was a pause after the sixth seal to learn what was happening to the Church in the midst of God's judgement (chap. 7), so we pause after the sixth trumpet to hear God's word about His prophets and witnesses.
2. The angel and the little scroll (10:1-11). In Daniel 10:4-12:13, a mighty angel appears to Daniel with a “face like lightning, his eyes flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude” (10:6). He predicts to Daniel what history holds for the next several centuries, then shifts to foretell the end of the age. Notice, though, that the answer to the question “How long?” changes from Daniel to Revelation. Where before “it will be for a time,” now “there will be no more delay!”
3. The little scroll is probably called little to distinguish it from the scroll of destiny in chapter 5. John ingesting the scroll is symbolic of fully grasping and understanding the contents of the scroll, which will be a bittersweet message of salvation and judgement.
4. The two witnesses: not surprisingly, there are varying viewpoints on how to interpret this chapter. Some take it literally and suggest that the Temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt during the tribulations described in Revelation, and the two witnesses are two individuals who will prophesy during that time. Others take the chapter symbolically, stating that the temple is the church, the two witnesses are part of the church which must suffer martyrdom, and the great city is civilization utterly alien to God's will.
5. In Daniel 9:24-27 contains the prophecy that the remainder of history would be divided into 70 “weeks” of years. The 70th “week” would be divided into two parts of 3 ½ weeks each (Daniel 7:25, 12:7), or 1,260 days. Some interpreters understand this time symbolically - it means a “limited period of unrestrained wickedness.” Some see it as either half or all of the period of tribulation.
6. The two witnesses: Jewish law required two witnesses to confirm the guilt of a criminal. The power they are given is like that of Elijah (cf. I Kings 17:1; II Kings 1:10-12) and Moses (Exodus 7:17-21). They are prophets in the truest sense; they declare God's judgement and urge the corrupt world to repent. Sackcloth clothing was most often worn as a sign of mourning and penitence. The word “witness” is often associated with the church (cf. Mark 13:10).
7. 11:7 is the first mention of “the beast” from the Abyss, who is the chief enemy of God in the last days (cf. 13:1-18, 17:7-11).
8. The seventh trumpet doesn't bring a “third woe”, but a heavenly chorus of joy and an announcement that Christ has come. This is odd because we still have another six chapters before John describes the return of Christ.
9. The Ark of the Covenant was an acacia wood chest made to house the 10 Commandments given to Moses and symbolize the throne or presence of God among His people. It was probably destroyed when the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think is symbolized by John's eating the scroll of God's words and finding it sweet in his mouth but sour in his stomach? Have God's words ever tasted sweet but upset you when you digested them? Why does this happen?
2. What does 11:1-14 (the story of the two witnesses) tell us about God and the world's response to Him and the church? Is the world's response to the resurrection of the two witnesses in 11:13 encouraging to you?
3. To what extent is every Christian's responsibility and protection like that of the two witnesses?
4. What is one insight from 10:1 - 11:18 would you like to take to heart this week? How would you like it to affect your life in deeper ways? What action would you like to take along these lines?