

Dr. David Mathewson, Revelation, Session 15, Revelation 10-11, Trumpets and Interlude Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Mathewson, Revelation, Session 15, Revelation 7-8, Trumpets, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Dave Mathewson's lecture analyzes Revelation chapters 10 and 11, focusing on the **trumpet plagues** and a subsequent **interlude**. He interprets the **vast army** described as a **symbolic representation of demonic forces**, not a literal military. The lecture then **explains the significance of a "little scroll"** given to John, possibly representing the unsealed scroll from chapter 5, and its relation to **God's judgment and the faithful witness of the church**. Finally, he **examines the imagery of the measured temple and the two witnesses**, exploring their symbolic meaning within the context of God's judgment and the eventual establishment of His kingdom.

2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, Revelation, Session 15 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → Revelation).



Mathewson_Revelation_Session15.mp3

3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Dave Mathewson's lecture on Revelation 10-11:

Briefing Document: Revelation Chapters 10-11 (Mathewson Lecture 15)

I. Overview

This lecture focuses on Revelation chapters 10 and 11, specifically the "Interlude" between the sixth and seventh trumpet judgments. Dr. Mathewson argues that this section is not a digression but rather a crucial interpretive lens for understanding the previous judgments (chapters 8-9) and the role of God's people within them. He emphasizes that chapters 10 and 11 explain *why* these judgments occur and how God's kingdom is ultimately established, connecting these events to Old Testament prophecy, particularly Daniel and Ezekiel.

II. Key Themes and Concepts

- **Demonic Onslaught (Sixth Trumpet - Rev. 9):** The 200 million horsemen are not a literal earthly army but symbolic of a demonic force:
- "So clearly, this is to be understood not as a physical earthly army, but once again, using the symbolism of a mount of troops, using it symbolically to refer to a demonic onslaught, to refer to demonic supernatural beings, not a literal earthly army belonging to any nation."
- The purpose is to deceive humanity, aligning with the actions of Satan and the Beast (Rev. 12-13).
- This demonic force inflicts spiritual death, and possibly physical death, on one-third of humanity.
- These plagues are seen as judgments poured out upon idolatry and those who worship idols.
- **Purpose of the Plagues:** While the plagues are judgments, they also serve as a call to repentance, though people harden their hearts, mirroring Pharaoh's response in the Exodus:
- "So, in one sense, these plagues were designed to bring about repentance, yet instead, they further hardened humanity in judgment, much like they did in the days of Egypt."

- These preliminary judgments in chapters 8 and 9 anticipate and are a warning of the final judgment (chapters 19-20). The lack of repentance reinforces the idea that people ultimately choose judgment over turning to God.
- "So I take it that at the final judgment, humanity would still refuse to repent. They would still rather choose judgment, however awful and horrible that would be than choose life and God's presence."
- **Interlude as Interpretation:** The "Interlude" in chapters 10 and 11 is not a pause in the narrative but a vital interpretation of the trumpet judgments.
- "But instead, this interlude plays a crucial role in interpreting the meaning and the function of what has happened in chapters 8 and 9."
- This section focuses on the *why* of God's judgment and the role of God's people during that time.
- Chapters 10 and 11 don't narrate a separate time period but rather illuminate what's happening in chapters 8 and 9.
- **Recommissioning of John (Rev. 10):** John is recommissioned to prophesy, moving beyond the churches (Rev. 2-3) to the fate of nations and the faithful witness of the church:
- "But now John is recommissioned in chapter 10 to prophesy about the faithful witness of the church in chapter 11 and to prophesy about the fate of the nations and people from every tribe and tongue and language, as chapter 10 will tell us."
- This commissioning also involves judgment on those who persecute faithful witnesses.
- The events of chapters 8-9 are directly related to the rejection and persecution of God's faithful witnesses in chapter 11.
- **The Mighty Angel (Rev 10):** The angel described in Revelation 10 is most likely Jesus Christ himself:
- "Most likely, when it comes to the identity of this, we should probably understand this angel as Jesus Christ himself."
- This is supported by his attire (cloud, rainbow, fiery pillars), recalling Christ's depictions elsewhere in Revelation and the Old Testament (Daniel 7). He is seen as standing with one foot on the land and one foot on the sea which symbolizes his sovereignty over all of creation.

- **The Opened Scroll (Rev 10):** This is likely the same scroll as in Revelation 5, now opened rather than sealed:
- "The scroll in chapter 5 that was sealed and that got unsealed through chapter 6 and the seventh seal in chapter 8, now finally in chapter 10, the lamb who took the scroll, the slain lamb in chapter 5 who took the scroll from the right hand of God on the throne, now as a mighty angel holds the scroll, but now it stands opened, no longer sealed like it was chapter 5, now it stands opened."
- It represents God's plan for judgment and salvation, drawing from Ezekiel's scroll imagery.
- The scroll being held open now indicates that its contents are now being revealed and will soon play out in history.
- **Seven Thunders (Rev 10):** The seven thunders that John is told not to write down symbolize further judgments that will not be unleashed:
- "So the seven thunders would be seven further judgments...God is graciously cutting short his judgment."
- This indicates that God has not revealed everything, and that these withheld judgments suggest that God will bring about the final judgement, not more of these preliminary plagues.
- They may also signify that God is not going to use further preliminary judgements and that the final consummation is coming.
- **"Time Will Be No More" (Rev 10):** This statement means that God's historical purpose will reach its fulfillment and consummation, referencing Daniel 12:7:
- "So when John says time will be no more, he's not saying time ceases to exist, and we're just in some odd temporal existence. He's saying instead that God's progress of history will finally reach its culmination and its consummation."
- The "delay" that the souls under the altar asked about (Rev. 6:10) is over.
- The consummation is about to arrive, meaning there is no more need for God to work within history to achieve his purposes, as they are about to be fulfilled.
- **Eating the Scroll (Rev 10):** John eating the scroll is symbolic, drawing from Ezekiel 2-3:
- "So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth."

- The message is initially sweet but turns sour in his stomach, representing the dual nature of his message: both salvation and judgment. The sourness being first indicates the greater emphasis on judgment.
- The content of this scroll is what will be unfolded in chapter 11 and perhaps beyond.
- **Two Witnesses (Rev 11):** God establishes two witnesses who will prophesy for a limited time (1260 days) and then be killed, later resurrected.
- "And it is through his witnesses that God will consummate his purposes for establishing his kingdom. It's through his witnesses who are rejected and who are persecuted and even put to death that God is going to bring about his judgment on the entire world..."
- They have the power to inflict plagues, showing they operate with God's authority.
- The rejection of the witness is what leads to God's judgment on the world.
- **The Temple (Rev 11):** Part of the temple is measured, and another part is given over to the Gentiles for 42 months:
- "I was given a reed like a measuring rod and I was told, go and measure the temple of God and the altar and count the worshippers there, but exclude the outer court."
- The imagery here needs further explanation.

III. Significance of Chapters 10 and 11

- **Theological Significance:** Chapters 10 and 11 clarify the *basis* for God's judgment. It's not arbitrary but arises from the rejection of God's witnesses and the continued idolatry.
- **The Role of the Church:** The church plays a vital role as faithful witnesses who suffer, die, and are resurrected which brings about God's judgment on the world. This emphasizes that God's kingdom is established through the faithful witness of his people.
- **Connection to Old Testament:** Mathewson draws connections to Daniel and Ezekiel, demonstrating that the events in Revelation are the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

IV. Points of Uncertainty and Further Discussion

- The exact nature of the "spiritual death" in Rev 9 and how that interacts with physical death.
- The precise identity of the two witnesses and the temple in chapter 11.
- The extent to which the scroll's contents go beyond chapter 11.

V. Conclusion

The interlude in Revelation 10-11 serves to interpret and clarify the preceding judgements (8-9). It introduces the important concept of the church's suffering witness as a crucial aspect of God's plan for the final judgment and establishment of His kingdom. Mathewson makes a compelling case for understanding the angel as Jesus and the open scroll as the same from chapter 5 which is now being fulfilled. The seven thunders' silencing shows that there won't be any more preliminary judgments and that the end is coming. This is all based on Old Testament prophecy, especially Daniel and Ezekiel. The church is a crucial factor in God's plan for bringing about the consummation by being a witness that the world will reject, which will thus usher in God's judgement on the world.

This briefing document provides a strong base to understand the complexities of Revelation 10 and 11, based on the insights of Dr. Mathewson.

4. Mathewson, Revelation, Session 15, Revelation 10-11, Trumpets and Interlude

Revelation Chapters 10-11 Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What does the number 200 million symbolize in the context of the sixth trumpet plague?
2. According to Mathewson, what is the primary purpose of the plagues in chapters 8 and 9?
3. What does Mathewson suggest regarding the common interpretation of the ungodly nations being thrown into the lake of fire?
4. What is the significance of the interlude in chapters 10 and 11, and how does it relate to the preceding chapters?
5. How is John recommissioned in chapter 10, and what is he now called to prophesy about?
6. What are the key features used to identify the mighty angel in Revelation 10 as likely Jesus Christ?
7. What is significant about the scroll that the mighty angel holds in Revelation chapter 10?
8. Why are the seven thunders sealed up in Revelation 10, and what are some possible interpretations of this action?
9. What is the significance of the angel's statement in Revelation 10:6 that "there will be no more delay"?
10. What is the symbolism and significance of John eating the scroll, and how is it similar to an event in Ezekiel?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The number 200 million does not represent a literal earthly army but symbolizes an incomprehensibly large demonic onslaught, similar to saying "a gazillion." The number indicates a quantity beyond human comprehension, not a specific military force.

2. The plagues primarily function as a judgment on humanity's idolatry, demonstrating the spiritual darkness and despair resulting from it. The plagues also serve as a warning of the final judgment, although they also had the intention of bringing about repentance.
3. Mathewson challenges the view that the ungodly are unwillingly dragged into the lake of fire, he argues that they choose judgment by refusing to repent. He believes Chapter 9 shows that they would rather face judgement than acknowledge God's lordship.
4. The interlude in chapters 10 and 11 is not a digression, but crucial for interpreting the meaning of the trumpet judgments in chapters 8 and 9. This interlude further unpacks the meaning of the previous judgments and what the role of God's people is during this time.
5. John is recommissioned by being told to prophesy again about the faithful witness of the church in chapter 11, and about the fate of all nations and people. He is also to prophesy about the judgment that will fall on those who persecute the faithful witnesses.
6. The angel is described with a cloud, a rainbow, a face like the sun, and fiery pillars, which are all reminiscent of descriptions of Christ in the Old Testament and other parts of Revelation. These descriptions point to the angel as Jesus Christ himself.
7. The scroll is the same one from chapter 5, now opened, not sealed, held by Christ, and contains God's plan for judgment and establishing His kingdom. It is symbolic of a message for John to proclaim.
8. The seven thunders are sealed up to indicate that God has not revealed everything, that God may be suspending further judgment, or that he's moving toward the final judgment instead of more preliminary judgments. It also suggests that we do not know the full plan of God.
9. The statement means that God's plan and purposes for history will reach their consummation, and there will be no more need for delay in their fulfillment. It signals the imminence of the final judgment and the establishment of God's kingdom.
10. Eating the scroll symbolizes John's acceptance and internalization of his prophetic message, which is both sweet (salvation) and bitter (judgment). This imagery is

modeled after a similar experience of the prophet Ezekiel, emphasizing the importance of receiving and proclaiming God's word.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the symbolism of the 200 million horsemen in Revelation 9 and analyze Mathewson's interpretation of their significance, relating it to his broader understanding of the book of Revelation.
2. Explore the importance of the interludes in the Book of Revelation, particularly focusing on the purpose and function of Revelation chapters 10 and 11 in relation to the preceding chapters.
3. Analyze the figure of the mighty angel in Revelation 10, and explain why Mathewson identifies him as Jesus Christ, referencing the textual evidence he uses to support this interpretation.
4. Discuss the significance of the open scroll and the sealing of the seven thunders in Revelation 10, analyzing the meaning of each in the context of Mathewson's interpretation of the book and the Old Testament prophetic texts.
5. Explain how Mathewson interprets the function of the two witnesses in chapter 11, examining their role in God's plan and how this interpretation relates to his analysis of the message contained in the scroll.

Glossary

- **Apocalypse:** A genre of prophetic literature characterized by visions, symbolism, and revelations of future events, often involving cosmic struggles between good and evil.
- **Demonic Onslaught:** A powerful attack by supernatural, evil forces, often represented in apocalyptic literature as a military force.
- **Idolatry:** The worship of idols or false gods, seen as a rejection of the true God.
- **Interlude:** A pause or break within a narrative sequence, often used in apocalyptic literature to provide interpretation or explanation.
- **Recommission:** To be given a new charge or duty after having been commissioned previously.
- **Prophecy:** A message or revelation from God, often delivered through a prophet, concerning present or future events.
- **Scroll:** A roll of parchment or paper, often used in ancient times for writing; in Revelation, scrolls are symbolic of divine messages and plans.
- **Symbolism:** The use of objects, images, or events to represent abstract ideas or deeper meanings.
- **Theological Meaning:** The deeper spiritual or religious significance of a text or event, particularly in relation to God's purposes and character.
- **Trumpets (in Revelation):** The symbolic instruments of judgment in Revelation, each one releasing a different plague or destructive event.
- **Two Witnesses:** The two figures in Revelation 11 who prophesy and are persecuted, representing God's faithful people and their witness to the world.

5. FAQs on Mathewson, Revelation, Session 1, Revelation 10-11. Trumpets and Interlude, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Revelation Chapters 10-11, Trumpets, and the Interlude

1. **What is the significance of the 200 million horsemen in Revelation 9?**
2. The 200 million horsemen are not meant to be taken as a literal earthly army. Instead, the number, "two times 10,000 times 10,000," is a symbolic expression signifying a number beyond human comprehension, similar to saying "a gazillion." It represents a massive, overwhelming demonic onslaught, not a literal military force. The description of this army, with features like lion's teeth and associations with smoke and sulfur, further reinforces its demonic nature rather than an earthly army.
3. **What is the purpose of the plagues described in the trumpet judgments of Revelation 8-9?**
4. The plagues are primarily judgments against the idolatry of humanity and its rebellion against God. They serve to demonstrate the spiritual darkness and death that result from worshipping idols and being involved in idolatrous systems. The plagues also highlight the demonic forces behind these systems, aiming to harm God's people. While one intention of these plagues might have been to lead people to repentance, the text indicates that humanity instead hardened their hearts, further emphasizing their rejection of God. These plagues serve as a warning of the final, more severe judgment to come.
5. **How does the interlude in Revelation 10-11 relate to the trumpet judgments of Revelation 8-9?**
6. The interlude in Revelation 10-11 is not a digression but a crucial interpretation of the trumpet judgments in chapters 8-9. It does not describe separate events but rather deepens our understanding of what those events signify. Chapters 10-11 explore the basis for the judgments, specifically how the persecution and rejection of God's faithful witnesses by the world play a role in those judgments, and also highlights the role of God's people during this time. It sets the stage for the final judgment by re-commissioning John to prophesy about the fate of the nations and the church's role as a faithful witness.

7. **Who is the mighty angel described in Revelation 10, and what is the significance of the little scroll he holds?**
8. The mighty angel in Revelation 10, described with features like being robed in a cloud, having a rainbow above his head, and legs like fiery pillars, is most likely Jesus Christ. This angel is presented as having sovereignty over all creation. The little scroll he holds is probably the same scroll from Revelation 5, which was sealed but is now opened. This scroll contains God's plan of salvation and judgment, and it being open symbolizes the plan is now ready to be unfolded. It connects the events that have occurred thus far to their completion.
9. **Why are the seven thunders in Revelation 10 sealed up, and what does that signify?**

The seven thunders represent a series of potential judgments beyond the seven seals and trumpets. The fact that John is commanded to seal them up suggests three possibilities: First, that God has not revealed all the details of His plans, and some things remain mysterious. Second, that God, in his mercy, has decided to cut short further judgement on humanity. Third, that God will not send any more preliminary judgments and will move directly to the final judgement. Sealing the thunders also emphasizes that not every aspect of God's plans will be known, and to caution against arrogance in predicting the future of the apocalypse.

1. **What does the angel's declaration that "time will be no more" mean in Revelation 10?**
2. The phrase "time will be no more" does not mean time ceases to exist; instead, it signifies the culmination and consummation of God's historical plan. It indicates that the events prophesied by the Old Testament prophets, including Daniel, are about to find their complete fulfillment. This declaration signals an end to the "delay" described earlier, indicating that the final judgment is imminent and that God will no longer need to work through history in the same way to bring his purposes to pass. It is a promise that God will soon act definitively to bring about his kingdom.

3. **What is the significance of John eating the scroll, and what does it mean that it is sweet in his mouth but bitter in his stomach?**
4. John eating the scroll is an apocalyptic image, inspired by Ezekiel, symbolizing that John is receiving and internalizing God's message. The scroll being sweet in his mouth but bitter in his stomach signifies that John's message will contain both aspects of salvation and judgment. The sweetness represents the good news of God's kingdom, while the bitterness reflects the judgment that will come upon the wicked. The order of bitterness before sweetness may emphasize the message of judgment as a primary part of John's prophecy.
5. **Who are the two witnesses in Revelation 11, and what is their role in God's plan?**
6. The two witnesses in Revelation 11 are God's faithful messengers, sent to prophesy and bear witness to God's truth during the period of the trumpet judgements. Their suffering, persecution, and eventual death at the hands of the "beast" demonstrate the world's rejection of God. This rejection, in turn, becomes the very basis for God's judgment upon the world, which is to take place at the sounding of the seventh trumpet. This highlights how God's kingdom will be established through the faithful witness, even when persecuted and killed, and not necessarily through military might.