

Rev 26-02-11b

We're ready now to resume our study here in Revelation. We're going to enter into chapter 10. Remember now the sequence is seals followed by the trumpets.

We have now seen six and it's so interesting. We always call it the trumpets, but in chapter nine and chapter 10 here, it is the angels who sound. We know they have been given trumpets and that's obviously what's making the signal, but the actor is in view, just as with the seals, it said when he opened the fourth seal, when he opened the fifth seal, and here it is when the angels sound.

The trumpet is just a means by which they, in obedience to God's plan and program, announce the timing of events. So we are now here in chapter 10, but just preceding this in verse 20 and 21, the rest of mankind who are not killed by these plagues did not repent of the works of their hands in order that they should not worship demons and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

We could spend a lot of time. I think we generally know what this is about. And we think idolatry, that's pagan people bowing down in front of little statuettes.

And we don't realize that modern day idolatry is still the worship of material things that have been crafted by human ingenuity. And they are made out of many of the same materials. You would not have a phone if it were not for gold and silver and cobalt and a lot of other rare earth minerals and plastics and things that come from the earth.

And they are intermediaries. Paul says that covetousness is idolatry and the desire to acquire and to possess and to manipulate things in our environment. And it doesn't even have to be tangible things.

People want to be invested in things even at a great distance. And it sucks all of the air out of their spiritual room. There is no room for reflection or meditation or self-analysis, judging oneself, trying to determine why is it I'm unhappy.

This constant deflection of attention or other means by which we can't take a breath, take a moment. The counsel of scripture is to go into a quiet place. In the old King James, it said, go into your closet, separate.

The late Charlie Kirk wrote a whole book about how to implement Sabbath thinking in one's life and take a Saturday and turn off your devices and just tell people ahead of time, you're not gonna be able to get me this Saturday. I'm offline and live a life disconnected from this constant stream of fire and smoke and burning sulfur that is so characteristic of the online environment. And increasingly online is becoming people's world.

And you have all kinds of side effects from that in terms of lack of hand-eye coordination, spatial recognition, ability to interact with humans face-to-face, look somebody in the eye, give them a firm handshake. This is rapidly disappearing because social interactions are curated and filtered and very unnatural in the online world. And that has become the world.

Look at some of the studies on the average person younger than 40 and how much time they spend online. It's shocking. We used to think it was bad because kids watched a couple of hours of TV every day, come home from school and watch cartoons.

That pales to insignificance and microscopic perspective compared to not just that people are online, but what is being sluiced into the heart and mind and soul through that connection. And it is very little good. This is why the suicide rate among young people has never been higher in history.

Why is that? What would induce people to end their lives, to seek death as it says in our passage? They've been victims of the fire, the smoke and the burning sulfur. And it has corroded them to the point that they can't even understand what it is they're doing when they end their lives. So this brings us to a discussion of what is the nature of repentance? What is being pointed out here when it says that in spite of this, they did not repent.

You might put these passages in the margin at this point. Ezekiel 33, 11. God tells Ezekiel, "Say to them, as surely as I live," declares the sovereign Lord, "I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, "but rather that they turn from their ways and live." Turn, turn from your evil ways.

Why will you die, O house of Israel, people of Israel? Why should you die? This is true whether or not the evil people are people of God. It is especially true of those who are in a covenant relationship with God, but there is the possibility of turning. Why do they not turn? The whole point of verses 20 and 21 here is that after the five months of torment, they do not turn.

After people are dropping like flies as a result of violence and incapacity, inability to even know what is really going on, and people killing other people and justifying it in their own minds. Death, demon-inspired, demon-motivated, demon-encouraged, and widespread. This is a unprecedented number of people who die as a result of this hate speech and distortion, misinformation, and all the things we discussed in the first session.

And people do not turn. So you can put with this Ezekiel 33, 11. You can put with this Proverbs 1, 23.

"Turn you at my reproof," says the Lord. "Behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you. "I will make known my words unto you, "because I have called and you refused.

"I've stretched out my hand and no man regarded, "but you've said it not, all my counsel, "and would have none of my reproof. "I will laugh at your calamity." God, this laughing is not a funny laugh. This is, I am gonna be unmoved by your calamity.

God is indeed going to withdraw that which restrains these calamities and has provided the opportunity to repent. So you can read that in its entirety. I don't have time to cover the whole passage.

We've looked at it in our Proverbs study. But Proverbs 1, 23 through 33, the consequences of failure to repent. And there will come a time when God is no longer available.

He will no longer be here when those who have rejected him consistently across time appeal out of self-interest. This is Pharaoh in Egypt, just wanting the pain to stop. And God knows better.

It's not genuinely motivated. 2 Corinthians 4, 3 and 4. This is a verse I learned with my mother when I was about four years old. But you can begin in verse one.

Let's look at 2 Corinthians 4, verses one through four. Verse one, therefore, Paul says, God has given us this ministry described in the preceding chapter, previous chapter. Since God in his mercy has given us this ministry, we do not lose heart.

Instead, we have renounced secret and shameful ways. We do not practice deceit, nor do we distort the word of God. This is an honest ministry of communication of truth, antithetical to what we have seen in our context, which will prevail in the days of the 200 million demons.

We have renounced secret and shameful ways. We don't want that to be any part of our operation or our communication. We do not practice deceit, and we do not distort the word of God.

On the contrary, by open proclamation of the truth, we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The God of this age has blinded the minds of those who are faithless.

Ah, pastia, those without faith, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not proclaim ourselves, verse five, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. It is the God who said, let light shine out of darkness, that made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4, one through six. What an opposite, what a diametric polar opposite to what we see with the release of these demons. If we do not avail ourselves of God's grace, and this is true in our daily lives right now, how important is it to not get distracted by work, not get distracted by people, circumstances, any unbeliever can live life in the moment, and be reacting and responding to circumstantial incursions.

And I heard this, and I saw that, and I felt this, and I experienced that, and this is what happened in my day. Anybody can be bumped along like the steel ball in a pinball machine, and you hit this bumper and you roll across, and you hit that little socket and get sprung back up, and you're just pinged and ponged this way and that way by the slings and arrows of

outrageous fortune. We have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We have the power of God to stabilize us. We have light, the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and it ought to make a difference. Every single day, we should have a distinguishably different life.

We have a peace that passes understanding. We have stability that is incomprehensible and causes people to ask us a reason for our hope. How can you be so at peace? How can you maintain your equanimity when look at what's happening? Be ready always to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you.

That hope has to be evident. We have to be reflecting that hope as people who day by day rest in the promises of God, the power of God, the provision of God, the presence of God in our lives. If we're not doing that, we are not representing the Lord Jesus Christ as his body on this earth because that's what he did.

And he could pass unharmed through the middle of a hostile crowd because he was literally fulfilling God's purpose of bearing witness to the truth. That's our purpose. And if we're not doing it, why should God spend time providing and protecting and blessing us with his presence? If we're not doing the job, why are we here? This is our purpose.

This is what defines us and should motivate us day by day. So be sure and put 2 Corinthians 4, one through six. We can only be in this wonderful status of light and life if we repent, if we maintain that repentance.

1 John 1, seven, walk in the light so that the blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing us. 1 John 1, nine, acknowledging our sins and getting those things cleansed, washing our robes, which is something we do. They're not like our laundry at Annapolis where you put it in a bag and set it outside.

Somebody comes and picks it up, washes it, brings it back, hopefully cleaned and dry, and it's done for you. We have to wash our own clothes. We have to take account.

And we are going to see this upcoming that there is the necessity for action on our part. We're going to see it reflected in John himself in this next chapter. So let's look at chapter 10.

Having taken to heart in this age and in this time and in our lives, what we've observed in the preceding couple of chapters, here we are in chapter 10. John says, I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was on his head. His face was like the sun and his feet like pillars of fire.

Immediately when you see the rainbow and the fire and the heavenly aspect here, we can't help but be reminded of the picture of the Lord Jesus at the beginning of this revelation. The rainbow that characterizes the throne of God and surrounds it. And we think, and many have thought, and many believe, interpretation-wise, that this is the Lord Jesus himself.

It is not. It is the same unfortunate misapprehension that pertains to the angel of the Lord in the Old Testament. Because the angel of the Lord speaks in the first person for God, the way my telephone does when somebody is talking to me over it, some have thought that this is the pre-incarnate Christ.

Well, he's not pre-incarnate if he's incarnate enough to stand there and talk like an angel. And the Lord Jesus is not an angel. And the Greek here really helps us out because when John says, I saw another angel, there are two words in Greek for another.

One is *allos*, A-L-L-O-S, and the other is *heteros*. And you know what *heteros* is, right? Homogenous means everything is the same. Heterogeneous means it's mixed up of different kinds of things.

Homosexuals prefer people of their same gender. Heterosexuals follow the biblical model that if I'm a guy, I like girls. If I'm a girl, I like guys.

Heteros, something different. So *heteros* means another of a different kind. That's not the word we have here.

This is *allos*. I saw an angel, another of the same kind, which means this angel partakes of the same nature as the angels that have been sounding the trumpets. The angels that have been present in various activities, venues, and presentations in these recent chapters.

So this is an angel. It is not the lamb. It is not the glorified Lord Jesus we saw in chapter one.

This is an angel. However, he has these characteristics that are strongly associated with the presence of God. The rainbow.

What is the rainbow? It is the sign of covenant relationship. It surrounds God's throne. It was defined after the flood for Noah.

God says, I will put my bow in the cloud and it is the sign of my covenant promise. I will never destroy the earth by a flood. So destruction is coming.

Here's a rainbow, but it's not gonna be a flood. Whatever it is, it's not gonna be washed away by water. But this is associated with Jesus Christ.

And I would submit to you in the same way that the angel of the Lord is associated with the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This angel is associated with the Lord Jesus by the context of revelation, because these things are so close to the description of the glorified Lord Jesus that people think this is him. But he is an angel closely associated with the Lord Jesus, perhaps in charge of the forces under the Lord Jesus' control.

The mighty angel. He is a strong angel. We saw this angel or a similar angel back in chapter five, verse two.

I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne, a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the scroll and loose its seals. So this is a mighty angel.

And you could loosely call him the book angel in chapter five. God is there with the seven sealed scroll in his right hand. And this angel says, who's gonna open this scroll? I am the security angel for this scroll, right? Now, notice we have another mighty angel.

Same word, iskoros. If you keep track of your Greek words for power, this is iskoros. You know, we have dunamis and iskoros and many other words for might.

You find them, all five of them in Ephesians chapter one toward the close of the chapter. So clothed with a cloud, behold, he cometh with clouds. Clouds are associated with the glory of the Lord Jesus.

So is the rainbow. So is the glowing face like the sun and the burnished feet, the feet that burn like fire. But notice the mighty angel in chapter five took the book from the father and gives it to the lamb, right? Who is worthy? He determines that the security protocols have been satisfied.

And the worthy one is allowed to take the scroll. Here, he has a little book open in his hand and he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land. This is so full of helpful information.

He has a little book. The book in chapter five was a biblion, B-I-B-L-I-O-N is where we get the word Bible. Biblion, it's the book, capital B, right? Biblion.

This, the reason it says little book, this is Biblarion. It's got a diminutive suffix. It's like chica and chiquitita, or in Spanish, you can add suffixes and it means a little version of a thing.

Pequeño, pequito. You change the end and it gets even smaller. I think that's right.

My Spanish is a little rusty. The other one was Biblos? Yeah, Biblos is the one in chapter five. Biblos is the standard word for a book, a scroll, literally.

They didn't have books in these days. So it is the scroll. In the scroll of the book, it is written on me.

Lo, I have come to do thy will, O God. It's a scroll book. This is Biblarion, which is little book, and it is rightly translated little book.

Notice, or little scroll would be more accurate. But notice, he cries with a loud voice in verse three, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices.

When the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered and do not write them. So notice, he sees the angel, and the angel has the little book. That's when the seven

thunders sound.

This angel appears. He's got one foot on the sea and one foot on the land. Keep track of those feet, because it's gonna help us hear a verse or two hints.

But there is an interruption. He's got the book in his hand. And in the same way that when the main scroll is opened, as the seals are lifted, things happen.

It's very compressed, it's very condensed, and it's very cryptic here, intentionally so. But the seven thunders on the model of what we've seen with seals, trumpets, and what we will see with the bulls, they don't all go off at once. They would be sequential.

They would probably be grouped with four thunders followed by three thunders. That's how we saw the seals with the four horsemen followed by the last three seals. We saw the first four of the trumpets, the trumpet angels, and then the last three are the three woes, separate and distinct from the first four.

So these sevens are, and we'll see it when we get to the bulls, four and then three, four and three, four and three. There's no reason to think that the thunders are any different. So even though nothing is said about the thunders, we can interpolate and extrapolate because biblical prophecy is pattern.

Write it down, put two asterisks in front of it, put two asterisks behind it. Bible prophecy is pattern. It is not merely prediction, although it includes prediction.

This helps you understand the gospel of Matthew, that it might be fulfilled. It was spoken by the prophet. It is not a literal fulfillment that he will be called a Nazarene.

It fits a pattern. He's the Netzer, he's the root shoot. Malachi says, Elijah will come before the great terrible day of the Lord.

John the Baptist is Elijah, says the Lord Jesus, if you receive him as such. He wasn't received, so there has to be another Elijah. Is it going to be the literal Elijah? Some think so.

We're coming up on the two witnesses here in chapter 11. But we have these thunders, and I remember hearing, there's a wonderful Bible teacher, Naval Academy graduate named Chuck Missler that many of us were exposed to in years gone by. He's collecting his heavenly reward at this point, but he used to say, if we don't get to hear what the thunders said, why even put it in the book? It just creates a tantalizing puzzle, and I wish he wouldn't even have written it down.

If he's not supposed to say what they said, well, don't even mention them, because now I'm curious and I want to find out. I'm scratching my head and searching the scriptures and trying to figure it out. But it is intended by God that we not know what they said, but it is also intended by God that we know that they spoke.

And we can infer from the context of the legitimate context that they will have spoken sequentially, that the first four will have been aimed in one direction and the last three will have had a related function among themselves, and that they are inserted here at this point after the appearance of this Christ-serving angel, if you will, this second book angel who is standing there, and we are told that he's got this scroll in his hand. And unlike the first book, this book is open, it tells us in verse two, this scroll is open. It is not sealed.

It's not like you crack a seal on the little scroll and a thunder speaks. This one is open, but it is not identical to the Biblion that we saw in chapter five. This is a little book.

Now, if you've been introduced to a big book or a big scroll and it's sealed and it gets unsealed, and then shortly thereafter, here's a little scroll that's already open, what is the almost inescapable conclusion? The little book is an excerpt, a selection from the big book. We used to have field manuals in the Marine Corps, FM 6-40 is the Bible for field artillery, gunnery, gunnery procedures in the field artillery. The 6-50 is cannon battery procedures.

This is how you set up the guns and do all of the physical arrangement of a battery and move from place to place and set up your primary, alternate and supplementary positions and all the rest of it. These are important field manuals and they're comprehensive. When you open them up, everything you need to know about gunnery is in 6-40.

Everything you need to know about battery and placement and procedures is in 6-50. We don't ever say 40 and 15, the artillery we have to enunciate the digits. So this is a pertinent chapter.

If you want to know how to compute data for a fire mission of a particular kind, you don't need the entire 6-40, you just need the chapter on computing firing data because that's what's pertinent. That's what you need for this particular occasion, this particular application at this particular moment. I don't need to read the entire field manual to figure out how to execute a call for fire on a target identified by a grid location.

I just need the part of the book that pertains to that. We all understand this, right? So this little scroll, this little book is a specific excerpt from the large scroll that has a specific and intended purpose. And we're going to see that purpose.

But as it is presented, this angel, he doesn't descend, he doesn't ascend, he merely stands. He appears and he is standing. I see him.

He comes down from heaven clothed with a cloud. So he isn't, let me back up a little bit. He does descend from heaven, but he does not fall from heaven like the star we saw earlier on that has the key to the bottomless pit.

He descends. This is controlled descent and landing. And he places a foot on the sea and he places a foot on the land.

More about that shortly. Scripture will interpret itself. And once John sees him and sees the little

book, the little scroll, he cries with a loud voice as when a lion roars.

And when he cries out again, like the thunders, this was a discernible, understandable call issued by this angel. But John says, it's a lion's roar. He doesn't give us any words.

Back during the time of the seals, the four living creatures utter their voice and they say in a loud voice, come. And here comes a horseman. Other times there are voices from heaven and their words are recorded and discerned.

This, as with the thunders themselves, we are not given the content of what the angel says. But when he cries out, the seven thunders utter their voices. So this whole thing is classified.

I think it is designed to prevent the enemy and his minions from preparing for what is going to unfold as these thunders one by one in a four plus three pattern turn loose something that is entirely under God's control. And we know this because it occurs at the behest of this angel that descends from heaven. This doesn't happen because the fallen Lucifer star unleashes demons from the pit.

It isn't because the four angels who are incarcerated in the Euphrates are freed. This is of God, from God, and the thunders are often representative of the voice of God. And you know the occasions on which people thought that it had thundered, the road to Damascus, the baptism of the Lord Jesus and elsewhere.

The thunder, Old Testament and new, represents the voice of God. So these thunders are giving commands directly from God. And those are not revealed at this point.

John hears them and understands them. There's a principle here. We can know and understand things from God.

We can be let into mysteries. Remember when Paul talks about being, I knew a man 14 years ago who was taken to the third heaven and heard things that a man is not allowed to repeat. Paul heard things that he never put in his letters and never included in his preaching and teaching because they were classified.

He had a security clearance. He was privy to them. He understood them.

And he had, hear me now, the self-discipline to keep to himself what should not be spoken, even though he knows it. You can know a thing that doesn't mean it is proper, much less wise to impart it, to communicate it, to let it out. There are some pieces of information.

There are some understandings, even from the word of God, that should come to us and be retained within us, never spoken, never let out. Some of us have been party to things decades ago that are still not to be spoken of. They are still classified by the US government and the US military.

And to this day, there are things that we don't speak of, we don't reveal, and we are trusted

even after our time of active service is over, not to spill the beans. There are things that we will come to understand from the word of God and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that are wonderful truths. They sustain us, they shine, they burn within us, and they are wonderful gifts from God.

And at the same time, we have an awareness that this is something just for me. I don't need to tell everything I know. And if we're not sure, we can pray.

Lord, is this something I should share or something I should just enjoy as a gift from you to me, a personal, just between you and me? It's a special understanding that we too share. You think about the Lord Jesus going off to pray by himself. The disciples heard some of his prayers, but most of Jesus' prayers, his communion with the Father, that was personal between the Father and the Son, and no one else is privy to it.

Many of us have those things with our heavenly Father. Treasure them, enjoy them, be lifted up and encouraged, strengthened with might in the inner man by them, but don't spill it. This is a gospel truth.

It is a biblical truth. Have the discipline to know what you can share and what you keep to yourself until the time. In glory, we'll have so much to talk about, but have the discipline as John has.

John heard and understood everything. I'm sure he was bursting to talk about the thunders. Can you believe what God is going to do in this sevenfold unfolding plan? John is probably about to explode right there on the Isle of Patmos.

He has spiritual discipline, wonderful attribute to cultivate, whether it is prayer, whether it is converse with fellow believers, keep our own counsel, be wise, know when to speak and when to remain silent. There are times when the Lord Jesus in his trials uttered not a word, opened not his mouth. Other times, oddly enough, he didn't talk to the Jews, but he talked to Pilate.

The one that actually ended up getting him crucified, Jesus talked to Pilate. Jesus knew when to speak and when to keep his own counsel. We should do the same.

So when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write, he was about to write. This tells us something else. John is recording these visions as he goes.

He didn't get to the end of all of these revelations and then sit down to write. And when he got to the part about the thunders, an angel stopped him. He is about to write as he hears it.

When he saw the seals being opened, he's writing it down. I think he's dictating. That's why the language of the revelation is so different from any other book.

That, well, John couldn't have written it, harumph, harumph, say the skeptics. And they don't understand, the guy is talking as fast as he can, trying to describe what he is seeing and getting

his amanuensis to write it down. And of course it's sloppy Greek.

Have you ever tried taking notes in a Bible class where the guy's talking fast? This is John. Would you like your Bible notes to be representative of and compared to when you sit down and write a careful letter to a relative or a friend or something? And you say, well, Patty didn't write those Bible notes. Look at the smoothness of her letters and look at the choppiness and the ellipses and the bad spelling and the poor grammar in these notes.

She couldn't have written this, bah humbug. John the apostle wrote this book and we're nowhere going to see it more clearly than in this chapter and the one to follow. But we're out of time for tonight.

But the thunders have spoken. John has heard them. John does not write it down.

And we're going to pick up. It is as though you could take out verse three and four and pick up at verse five. The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven.

Your homework for this coming Sunday is to look at that verse, read the rest of this chapter and see what you think. Read that verse, read the rest of the chapter. You're going to see a connection.

What does the connection mean? That's where we'll pick up on this Sunday. But what a fruitful source of application we have here with speech. Not only filtering what we hear said by others in the second woe, but knowing when to ensure that we are not the sources of sloppy speech, speaking when we should remain silent.

Bridling the tongue, as James says. Bridle that thing, you got your whole body in submission. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for these wonderful passages that even though they are set in the future and depict things to come, are so pertinent and helpful for us in the present day. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit will help us to be alert and aware of when we can make application of what we are learning here. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.