

1. **Introduction:** The first 4 trumpet judgments were directed at the earth's ecology. The first trumpet sent fires to earth's surface to burn up a third of all trees, vegetation, and green grass. The second turned a third of the sea to blood killing a third of the sea creatures and sinking a third of the ships.

- The third trumpet brought about poisoning of a third of the fresh water on earth, rendering it bitter. The fourth trumpet caused loss of a third of the luminosity of sun, moon, and stars.
- The fifth trumpet (first woe) was directed at people. It released a supernatural torment of billowing smoke and a demonic invasion from the Abyss. For those who reject God, an overwhelming level of torment, pain, and agony is imposed by a swarm of locusts having power to torment for 5 months with stings like scorpions that do not kill the victims.
- The sixth angel's trumpet blast (second woe) was directed at people. It unleashed a terrifying demonic army, 200 million strong, to kill a third of all humans living at the time. Despite the succession of horrible judgments (from seals to trumpets), those not killed in the judgments would not repent.

2. **Result of Seal and First 6 Trumpet Judgments - Revelation 9:20-21:** *The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk,<sup>21</sup> nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.*

- Revelation 10 is an interlude between sixth and seventh trumpet judgments. During the interlude, John sees a mighty angel descend holding a small open scroll. Seven thunders speak. John wants to write down what the thunders say, but he is told no. Instead, seal the thunder's message.
- The angel swears there will be no more delay. The "mystery of God" will be completed when the seventh trumpet sounds. John is to take the little scroll and eat it, signifying absorbing its message.
- The scroll tastes sweet like honey in John's mouth but is bitter in his stomach. This symbolizes the dual nature of prophetic ministry - the joy of receiving God's revealed word in contrast with the difficult, often painful reality of proclaiming messages of judgment and experiencing hardship. The chapter concludes with John being commanded to continue prophesying to the nations.
- Between the sixth and seventh trumpets, the interlude includes two visions, the first (a mighty angel holding a little scroll, 10:1-11). The second in 11:1-13 and concerns two witnesses.
- Many interpreters consider Chapter 11 to be the most difficult portion of Revelation. We will examine some of the issues involved in interpreting the chapter.

- At the end of chapter 10, as commanded, John took the little scroll and ate it, thus symbolically absorbing its full contents. He is then told, ***“You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings.”***
3. **Revelation 11: 1-2:** ***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, <sup>2</sup> 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 vital question is, what does the “Temple of God” refer? Not all agree.
  - Scripture gives a clear answer in several places like 1 Peter 2 and 2 Corinthians 6. For example, in 1Peter 2:5 Peter says to believers, you are like living stones who are ***“being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”***
  - The people to whom Peter wrote and most everyone else would have known immediately what Peter meant. A “spiritual house” and a “holy priesthood” and “spiritual sacrifices” were clear indications that Peter in unmistakable terms meant that ***we, the church, are the true temple of God.*** In 2 Corinthians 6:16, Paul said it more explicitly, ***“For we (“in Christ”) are the temple of the living God.”***
  - What is the basis for this conclusion? The crucial concept is found in OT revelation of the visible manifestation of God’s splendor among His people, the *shekinah* of God, His majestic and radiant glory.
  - Before Solomon’s Temple, God revealed His glory in the tent of meeting or tabernacle. ***“Let them make me a sanctuary,”*** the Lord said to Moses, ***“that I may dwell in their midst”*** (Ex. 25:8). There, God would come, dwell, and meet with His people. There, ***“the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent and (there) the Lord would speak with Moses”*** (Ex. 33:9).
  - It was there that ***“the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle”*** (Ex. 40:34). Thus, the tabernacle was where Israel’s people drew near to hear from God, to worship Him, and to stand in His presence (Lev. 9:23; Num. 14:10). Then came Solomon’s Temple with similar but even more wonderful examples of God’s presence.
  - God was intensely present in Solomon’s Temple. When the Ark of the Covenant was brought “to its place” in the inner sanctuary, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the cherubim” (2 Chron. 5:7), ***“the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God”*** (2 Chron. 5:14).
  - In the OT story of Israel’s history and relationship to God, their spiritual life was centered in the Tabernacle and Temple where God demonstrated His presence, speaking to His people, and making provision for forgiveness of sins. The Temple was fundamental and foundational to the life of Israel.

- Think about the long history of God’s presence centered in the Temple, followed by the stunning declaration from John that ***“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 1:14).
  - The Greek word translated “dwelt” literally means “to pitch a tent” pointing back to the OT when God’s glory dwelt in the portable tabernacle and eventually in Solomon’s Temple. Now, God has chosen to be with His people in Jesus of Nazareth, the Word who became flesh as the God-Man.
  - Jesus is the ultimate, the true shekinah glory of God, the complete and perfect manifestation of God’s presence among His people. ***He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power*** (Heb. 1:3).
  - God no longer lives in a portable tabernacle, nor in an ornate Temple built by human hands. He will not do so again. It is in Jesus, the God-Man, we find and meet God, the one “who saves!”
  - No longer is the Temple of God a structure made by human hands. Christ is the Temple of God. Scripture clearly states that the church is the body of Christ (formed from living stones) and therefore, Christ’s mystical body is the Temple in which God is pleased to dwell. The shekinah of Yahweh now abides permanently in Christ and His people, the body of Christ, through the Holy Spirit.
  - Paul’s description of this truth in Ephesians refers to our Lord Christ Jesus as the cornerstone, ***“in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you are also being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit”*** (Eph. 2:21-22).
  - Building the body of Christ as the Temple of God is ongoing. Peter said, the church is “made of living stones.” Living stones are added regularly. Paul says to the Corinthians, ***“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple”*** (1 Cor. 3:16-17).
  - When Paul pleads for sexual purity, he asks, ***“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body”*** (1 Cor. 6:19-20).
  - Paul’s declaration in 2 Cor. 6:16b, ***“For we are the temple of the living God”*** ties together several OT texts (Lev. 26:11-12; Isa. 52:11; Ezek. 11:16; 20:34,41; 2 Sam. 7:13) all prophesying a coming, end-times temple.
4. **Ezekiel 37:26-27** God declares, ***“I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”***

- As we see in Revelation 21, the eternal sanctuary of God that is promised to His people is our Lord, Christ Jesus, God Himself in their midst in the New Jerusalem.
- When Jesus was conceived, it was the beginning of God fulfilling His promise of an eschatological temple in which He will forever dwell. The promise advanced through the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The promise will be completed when Christ comes again.
- But what about a literal, physical temple in Jerusalem? Does this mean it has lost its spiritual significance in God's redemptive purposes? The answer is found in Jesus' words in Matthew 23-24.
- On Tuesday before His crucifixion, Jesus repeatedly confronted the religious leaders, pronounced woes on the scribes and Pharisees, and then, in the afternoon, left the Temple for the last time, walked with disciples to the Mount of Olives where He gave the Olivet Discourse (Mt. 24 and Mk. 13).
- As Jesus left the Temple, He said, ***"Your house is left to you desolate" (Mt. 23:38)***. It no longer was "God's" house but "your house." A few days later, Jesus died on the cross, and ***"the curtain in the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom"*** opening the way to God for believers. God ceased to bless the temple with His presence. The Temple was *Icahabod* (the glory has departed.)
- The physical destruction of the temple by the Romans in 70 AD was the outward consummation of God's spiritual rejection and repudiation. Jesus left the Temple to never return. Departing and taking His seat on the Mount of Olives (Mt. 24:3) suggests Ezek. 11:23 (***"the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain that is on the east side of the city."***)
- The only temple in which God now and forever will dwell is Jesus Christ and the Church. Any physical temple that might be built on the Temple Mount would seem to have no spiritual or theological significance (***Icahabod***, the glory has departed).
- If God were to approve rebuilding the Temple and reinstating its previous function of sacrificial worship, it would be a denial that the Word became flesh, dwelt among us, and was the final and perfect sacrifice for the redemption of many. It would mean repudiation of the Church being the body of Christ and the temple of God. It would oppose Paul's affirmation in 2 Corinthians 6 and Peter's affirmation in 1 Peter 2.
- The church is not simply a cultural institution meeting the needs of neighbors. As the new covenant people of God, the church is the "family of God" united through their common identity "in Christ." Christ is the living corner stone on which the church is built, and we "in Christ" are the living stones that constitute the building. It is a living building graced forever by the presence of the Lord.
- The command for John to measure the temple is a symbolic act signifying divine ownership, perseveration, and protection of God's redeemed people (those who are "in Christ.")