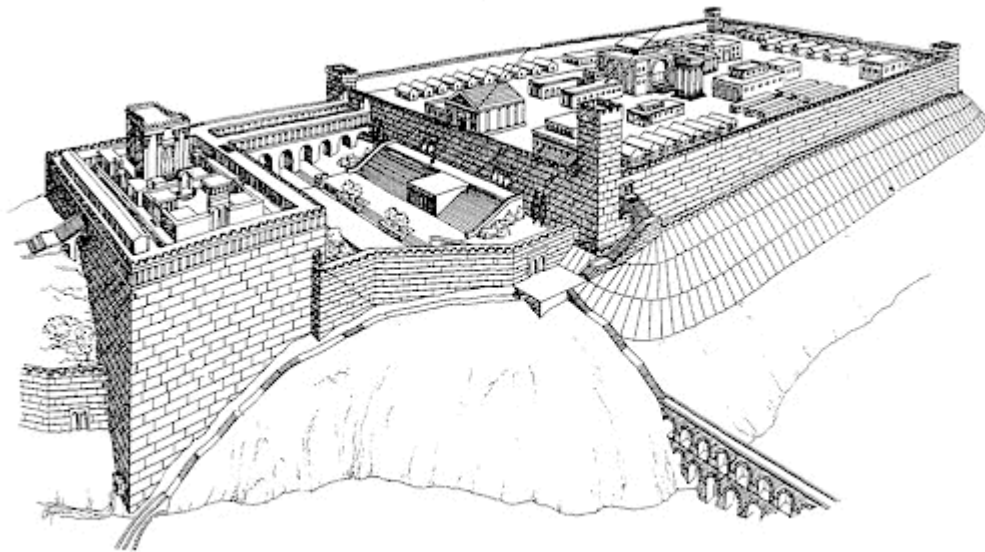


# Church of God Fellowship Sermon Summary

## Measuring the Temple



This information was originally presented in a sermon by Harold Smith on January 13, 2001. It is part two of a three part series starting with the "1335 Days" and ending with "The Counterfeit Christ".

# Church of God Fellowship Sermon Summary

## Measuring The Temple By Harold Smith

When it comes to actually understanding where we are in prophecy, one important question to ask is: How long will the temple be measured before Jerusalem is fully controlled by the beast?

What do we mean by "measuring the temple"? In order to understand this topic, we need to set the time frame when the measuring process occurs. In Revelation 10:1-3 we read, *"And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: [This angel symbolizes Christ, 1:15.] And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth. And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices."* [In chapter 5 Jesus is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah.]

When the angel spoke the seven thunders immediately uttered their voices. In order for John to have the ability to discern the exact number, these thunders were required to be sequential, one following another. Continuing in verse 4, *"And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, 'Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.'" [Thunder represents God's voice, as is shown*

in the books of Job and Psalms.]

God tells John not to write what the seven thunders said. God has purposely withheld certain information so the wicked will not understand how all the end time prophecies come to pass. For the same reason there are several incomplete books in the New Testament--the book of Acts, James, & Third John. They do not end with an "amen" like all of the other books in the New Testament, indicating that certain information was purposely left out of the Holy Scriptures until this age ends. Possibly, this information will be added to the Bible then.

God has determined that only the wise will be allowed to understand how the end time events will unfold. Daniel 12:10 says, *"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."*

In analyzing Revelation 10:4 these thunders could refer to God speaking through His Church during each of the seven eras outlined in chapters 2 and 3, where His exhortations are recorded. However, the thunders of chapter 10 may rather refer to God speaking to each of the seven eras. Possibly, the thunders contained critical information He planned to relate during the existence of each of these individual eras. This information may have

been referring to things specific only to the era during its historical existence. At the end of each of the seven eras Jesus exclaims, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" showing that there was pertinent information for all eras contained in each individual era's instructions. Possibly, each of the seven thunders was designated for only one era and its preservation was not necessary for any of the other eras.

Whichever is the case, as soon as the thunder of God's voice to the seventh era ends, a major prophetic milestone will occur. In Revelation 10:5-6 John writes, "*And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, and the earth, and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer.*"

This statement is similar to the one God made to Ezekiel when people were scoffing, questioning whether God's prophecies would ever occur. In Ezekiel 12:21-22, "*And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Son of man, what is this proverb that you people have about the land of Israel, which says, 'The days are prolonged, and every vision fails'? Tell them therefore, Thus says the Lord GOD: I will lay this proverb to rest, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel. But say to them, The days are at hand, and the fulfillment of every vision.*" God here emphasizes that everything He had prophesied and predicted was at hand.

Continuing in verses 24-28, "*For no more shall there be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. For I am the LORD. I speak, and the word which I speak will come to pass; it will no more be postponed; for in your days, O rebellious house, I will say the word and perform it, says the Lord GOD. Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Son of man, look, the house of Israel is saying, 'The vision that he*

*sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.'* Therefore say unto them, Thus says the Lord GOD: None of My words will be postponed any more, but the word which I speak will be done, says the Lord GOD." It was very clear to Ezekiel that God would only put up with things for so long, then it would come time to bring it all together.

This is exactly what John is writing as he records what the angel tells him in Revelation 10:6. The phrase, "there should be time no longer", refers to the fact that everything necessary for the beginning of the prophesied time periods (1335, 1290, and 1260 [ref. Daniel 11] ) will be in place once the seventh and final thunder is completed.

All of this ties in with measuring the temple. In Revelation 10:7 we read, "*but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.*" Contrary to verse 4, where John was told not to write down and reveal the seven thunders, here God is revealing that just prior to the seventh trumpet, signaling the end of the 1335, 1290, and 1260 days the mystery will be revealed. At the sounding of the seventh trumpet, signaling Christ's return, withholding understanding will no longer be necessary. These three time periods conclude when that seventh trumpet sounds. Christ returns and all the kingdoms become His. The first phase of God's plan for mankind is finished.

The word "apostle" means "one sent". The apostle John was a servant of God. He was literally "one sent" to deliver the messages God gave him. God is speaking to John who is simply recording information intended for an end time prophecy. Verses 8-10 state, "*Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, 'Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth.'* And I went to the angel and said to him, 'Give me

*the little book.' And he said to me, 'Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.' And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter."*

It is obvious this "little book" was composed of prophetic material because what it contained is both sweet and bitter. The end of all prophecy is sweet because of what it ultimately pictures. No longer will anyone be deceived. All people will be living with the spirit of God guiding and directing their lives. No longer will there be strife and contention. No longer will there be war, suffering and starvation. In their place will be prosperity, plenty, happiness and joy. All suffering will be a thing of the past.

However, between now and the sweetness of the fulfillment of prophecy is an enormous amount of bitterness. Many terrible things must happen first. Over five billion human beings are destined to die in horrendous events.

The primary focus on this little scroll is the prophetic information it contains. John is told to eat the little scroll. He does, making him responsible for the information it contains. This is the same as when Ezekiel was told to eat a scroll and then prophesy whatever it contained.

Not all of prophecy has been given to us at the present time. Continuing in verse 11, "And he said to me, 'You must prophesy again about [before, KJV] many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.'" At some point between the end of the seventh thunder and the beginning blast of the seventh trumpet--signaling Jesus' return--John, who represents the end time messenger(s) of God, is told that the words contained within the little book must be preached into all the world. The length of this commission of preaching and going before many peoples, nations, tongues,

and kings is not revealed for another three verses.

Moving on to Revelation 11:1, "Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, 'Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.'" There are three specific areas mentioned.

First, the temple as a whole is designated. In First Corinthians 3:16, Paul states that the Church is the temple of God.

Secondly, the altar is singled out. The altar represents those who oversee the worship within the Church. In ancient Israel, it was the priesthood and the Levites. Today, the ministry oversees the worship of God's people. Paul states in Second Corinthians 3:6 that the elders of the Church are ministers of the New Covenant. This makes it very clear that the ministry of the Church is to be measured.

Thirdly, those who worship at the altar, referring to individual members of the Church, must be measured.

The Greek word translated "measure" can mean one of two things: either "determining dimensions" or "apportioning what is due." In Matthew 7:2 Jesus warned, "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you."

In Revelation 11:2 Jesus instructs, "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles" [to the nations]. This shows the people who are not members of the Church of God [the holy nation, First Peter 2:9] are not to be measured. For these people there is nothing to base a measurement on because they do not have the Holy Spirit. Judgment is not on the nations of the world at this time. Judgment is now only upon the Church of God, as Peter records in First Peter 4:17, "For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God." This measuring

process is being accomplished on all people who are recipients of the spirit of God. Continuing in Revelation 11:2, *"And they will tread the holy city [Jerusalem] under foot for forty-two months."*[Which is equal to 1260 days.]

What does treading the city underfoot for 42 months mean? Does this mean at the end of the 42 months the beast and all who follow him are immediately removed? Could it mean that when this time has elapsed the seventh trumpet sounds? We know when the seventh trumpet sounds all the kingdoms on earth become the dominion of Jesus Christ. Notice verse 15, *"Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.'"*

To tread under simply means to have authority over. The beast will have authority over Jerusalem for 42 months. Once the trumpet sounds, Christ has ALL authority over every nation, so the beast no longer has any claim on Jerusalem.

Yet, the seven Last Plagues are still to come and there is no indication that they can all take place within the same day that the trumpet sounds. There is still an army of 200 million to bring down into the Valley of Jezreel East of Mount Megiddo to do battle with Jesus Christ and all the saints after the marriage supper (Revelation 19). It appears the end of "treading under foot" refers to the beast's loss of any further authority over the kingdoms of the earth. All authority becomes Jesus Christ's, but there is still the horrible Battle of That Great Day of God Almighty that must be fought (Revelation 16:14, 16).

In Revelation 11:3 God reveals He will empower two special servants: *"And I will give power to My two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."* God's two witnesses will fulfill what John was told in 10:11,

*"...you must prophesy again about [KJV, before] many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."*

John has recorded a lot of information for God's people who live during the end time. But there is still the "little book" with further prophetic information which isn't revealed. It is understood that this information is prophetic material because it is both sweet and bitter. Possibly, it may be the job of the two witnesses to speak this information during the last 3½ years.

In this way the two witnesses can fulfill Revelation 10:11 and complete Matthew 24:14 where Jesus says the gospel of the kingdom must be preached into all the world as a witness unto all nations before the end comes. No human organization can fulfill Matthew 24:14. Accomplishing this task will require supernatural power, which God will give the two witnesses.

Before God empowers His two witnesses, the events in Revelation 11:1-2 must be fulfilled--measuring the temple, the altar, and those who worship there. God will calculate the spiritual dimensions of those who make up the end time Church. He will measure them to see where they are spiritually. When this is completed, once He has obtained these measurements, He will then allocate sufficient time for them to mature and grow up spiritually.

God knew the problems the end time Church would have with self-righteousness. He spells it out very boldly in Revelation 3:14-20: *"And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing--and do not know that*

*you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.* "Why do they incorrectly believe themselves to be self-sufficient? Because they are doing what is right in their own eyes and believe God is pleased with them.

*"I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."* God says He gets the attention of those He loves, then gives them correction.

Some people do not want to be rebuked and disciplined. They misunderstand the love of God. If a person is in serious trouble spiritually, he must do something about it. We must understand that a major problem experienced by the final era of the Church is delusion. Individuals in this era of the Church are deluded as to their actual spiritual status with God. They think they are in better spiritual shape than they actually are.

Unfortunately, many believe they are spiritually superior to other members of God's Church and continually find fault with them. Yet rarely, if ever, do they realize the beams in their own eyes. Their spiritual condition is defined as wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.

God is allowing each of us time to find the beams in our own eyes and remove them so that we have the true love of God. True love is not just love for God but for each other also. We are not to sit back with a judgmental mindset and think that we are better than others. We must search ourselves, our hearts and minds, comparing ourselves not to each other, but to our elder brother, Jesus Christ. He is the only standard by which we can measure

ourselves.

So, when will the measuring of the Church be finished? When will the sacrifices begin and the false prophet rise up? When will Jerusalem become the headquarters of the beast? How much longer? God does not say.

Not everyone will wisely use this time God has allotted us. Scripture clearly reveals that some do not answer the door when Christ knocks. They leave Him standing outside instead of inviting Him in to be a part of their lives. One thing is for certain, the time period we are now in is not an indefinite period of time. It will come to an end! This is the time when those who are truly dining with Jesus Christ must unceasingly allow Christ into their lives to live in them, while they patiently endure the final days of the measuring process.