

the main points again...

Do you believe in the power of prayer?

Powerless in exile, powerful in the Spirit (cf. Zech 4.6)
Prayer combines the experience of being 'on Patmos' and being 'in the Spirit'. It is the realisation of personal powerlessness and, at the same moment, participation in God's power. I can do nothing, God can do anything.
- Eugene Peterson

Prayer answered with trumpets

A reveille or a last post?

The trumpets proclaim what God is doing in answer to our prayers and wake us up to participate in his actions on our behalf
- Eugene Peterson

Trumpets herald 'exodus-like' plagues
Not a final destruction but a limited demonstration to call people to repent
Purgative not punitive plagues

The inconvenient truths of the first four plagues

Ever hearing but never understanding the Abyss, limited torment and destruction

Purgative plagues failing...No repentance

The remaining men and women who weren't killed by these weapons went on their merry way—didn't change their way of life, didn't quit worshipping demons, didn't quit centring their lives around lumps of gold and silver and brass, hunks of stone and wood that couldn't see or hear or move. There wasn't a sign of a change of heart. They plunged right on in their murderous, occult, promiscuous, and thieving ways.
- Revelation 9.20-21, *The Message*

An interlude-

Chapters 10 and 11 '...a parenthesis in which the task of the church throughout the ages comes before us' (Morris)

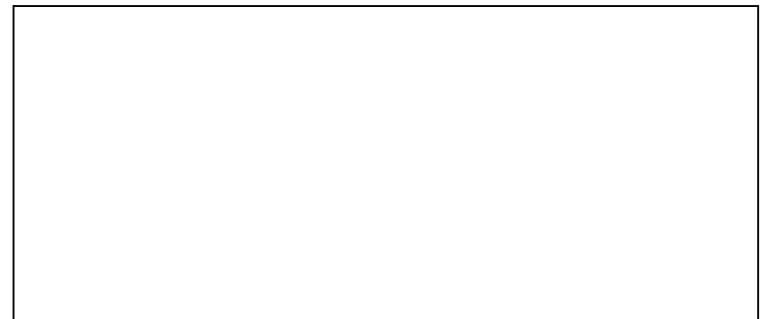
Christians have limited knowledge
...seven unrecorded thunders and a little scroll
Cf. 1 Corinthians 13.9-12

Call to not only to speak of the scroll but to become it...
Witnesses must first become what they say...Just because a conversation (or a sermon!) has the word 'God' in it, does not qualify it as Christian witness
- Eugene Peterson

Worship is protected in the temple, witness is not...
The temple as the true people of God
(Cf. 1 Corinthians 3.17,17; Ephesians 2.21; 1 Peter 4,5)

Faithful witness in the world will meet opposition and apparent death...
The present reality and the future to come
Kingdom coming and kingdom come...

The seventh unexplained trumpet will mean
The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.



So what?

These are very difficult chapters. Try to read them again out loud and jot down or remember any broad brushstrokes or phrases that stick with you... Discuss these.

The whole of this sequence seems to be an answer to prayer.

Eugene Peterson says,

Prayer combines the experience of being 'on Patmos' and being 'in the Spirit'. It is the realisation of personal powerlessness and, at the same moment, participation in God's power. I can do nothing, God can do anything.

Do you feel powerful as a Christian? Should we?

Do you have faith that a quiet word of prayer can indeed be a powerful thing?

Why do we say 'I can only pray...' as if this were second best...

How can we be more motivated to pray individually and corporately?

Thinking on the trumpets, do you agree with C.S.

Lewis that, 'God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains'

How do you feel about Revelation 9.20-21?

Is this depressing, reality or motivating?

Read Revelation 10.8-10

Do you agree with Peterson that,

Witnesses must first become what they say...Just because a conversation (or a sermon!) has the word 'God' in it, does not qualify it as Christian witness

What does that mean about our relation to God's word?

Do we need to enter the 'cocoon room' to be transformed?

If chapter 11 is about faithful witness by the church, what will it be like? Are we being 'offensive' enough?

Reflect on the Lord's Prayer looking at Revelation 11.15...

Sunday June 22nd 2008

it's curtains

Peeping into Revelation



Reveille or Last Post?

Revelation 8.2-11.18

Devoted to Christ, people, mission