

Wrapping Up!

Revelation 10

This chapter is a huge 'milestone' in the Revelation. As we've seen, every chapter is packed with action and amazing things. But, even as (along with the apostle John) our heads are spinning from it all, this portion should grab our attention afresh.

Chronologically, we are ending up the trumpet warnings to a sinful, rebellious world and about to enter fully into the period of God's wrathful bowl judgments. How long these bowl judgments will last is uncertain, but this prelude is, in a very important way, both the end and the beginning.

John the Baptist was the end of the Old Testament while Jesus' earthly ministry and sacrifice presented a new beginning (which at the same time was a fulfillment of what was spoken before by God to man). In a similar manner, the apostle John is going to receive in this chapter a message that signifies the end of an even greater epic. It, too, will lead into an even more magnificent work of Christ. Let's begin:

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. With the way John words this, "still another", you

sense his awe at all these powerful beings engaged in this 'final act', so to speak. Though there is imagery here to remind us of Christ, I'm inclined to see this being as what it says he is – a mighty angel. When we are presented with Jesus in other places in the book of Revelation, it is clear that it is Him, whether He's the Lion or the Lamb or the Word of God or the King of Kings, etc. There's no ambiguity of significance. The word "another" also indicates quite clearly that this is a mighty angel "like the others". The fact that he does share likeness with the risen Christ speaks to our own expectations as believers for the promise of God is: *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.* (Rom 8:28,29)

He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. In his hand is a scroll or book, and it is distinguished as being both little and open. In the Greek, it is specifically the diminutive of the word used for the sealed scroll which the Lamb previously took and opened, so it is not one and the same. In almost all instances in the Bible though, both the

diminutive and the root word refer to the Word of God.

Now, as he stands with his right foot on the sea and left foot on the land, we recall the imagery of Daniel in which we saw the representations of the gentile nations and the land of Israel respectively. With this in mind, it is probable that the message of this 'little book' speaks to both groups of people.

When a lion roars, those within earshot cannot ignore it. It startles and grips your attention. The Greek word for roar is related to the one for thunder and we know how thunder can have the same effect.

When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices. When God dealt with a hard hearted Pharaoh, He used thunder together with hail and fire. A shocked king told Moses, "*Entreat the LORD, that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail, and I will let you go...*" to which Moses replied, "*...the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that you may know how that the earth is the LORD'S.*" (Exo 9) It is the first mention of thunder in the scripture and is linked to God's judgment.

The first time, God spoke to a hard hearted Israel, it was also with thunder: *And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that*

were in the camp trembled. (Exo 19)

Job records: *Have you an arm like God? or can you thunder with a voice like Him?* (Job 40)

And the Psalms say: *The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail and coals of fire.* (Psa 18)

The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thunders: the LORD is upon many waters. (Psa 29)

These and other scriptures lead us to understand that with the seven thunders God is again speaking to a rebellious, hard-hearted world, both Hebrew and gentile. I believe these seven thunders are the seven Spirits of God we saw in chapters one, three, four and five. Cumulatively, they are the Holy Spirit of God.

Now 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." There are two different views on this event and both have merit.

First, keeping in mind that nothing happens by accident here, we know that the seven trumpets were indeed intended to sound, but their message is sealed. From this, we can deduce that God wants us to know that there is more to come, more that we aren't yet meant to know. He's not 'teasing' us with a mystery – that's

not His way. He simply wants us to know to expect more.

Second, and perhaps more obvious, the seven Spirits are henceforth silent. You could say that from this point on during the Tribulation, the Holy Spirit is done speaking to the rebellious world. He thunders one last time in complete unison and it's over. It is sealed and unrecorded. He was 'silent' as well for 100's of years before Christ's first coming up until John the Baptist. His ministry to protect and preserve the redeemed remnant of Israel will continue. There will be "thunderings" in future chapters but they are not specific to these Spirits.

In fulfillment of Christ's prophecy, *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."* (Mat 24:14) one last time an angel will circle the planet with the gospel message (later in chapter fourteen), but there is no indication that anyone beyond this point gets saved.

This parallels, as Jesus said it would, the days of Noah, for Noah, by the power of God's Spirit, preached to a rebellious world up until God said, "Come into the ark." As such, he foreshadowed the redeemed remnant of Israel who will be called out of "Babylon" (see Rev 18:4) into a wilderness and be preserved in the midst of God's horrendous worldwide judgment.

The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, 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, 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. It's a wrap. No more delay. In these days in which the seventh trumpet angel is about to sound, the mystery of God will be complete. By the wording above, we are to understand that these "days" include some events that are about to transpire in the next few chapters, but what is this mystery?

Let's look at what the scripture tells us in the following four passages:

*And He [Jesus] said unto them [His disciples], Unto you it is given to know the **mystery** of the kingdom of God: (Mk 4:11)*

*...by revelation He made known to me the **mystery** ...which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.*

*To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the **mystery**, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ. (Eph 3)*

*Even the **mystery** which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: (Col 1:26)*

*And without controversy great is the **mystery** of godliness:*

**God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.**

(1 Tim 3:16)

The mystery of God is His redemption of mankind, both Hebrew and gentile. All whom He knew, from before the beginning of the world, who would receive His gracious salvation are about to be taken to safety either in heaven or in an earthly wilderness. No more thunders speaking to a devil controlled world – after these days, there will only be wrathful outpourings.

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."

So 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."

Then 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. And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings." I'm inclined to believe that this little book is the very book we are studying. This is for several reasons:

- It is given to and consumed by John, and it is sent by an angel. This coincides with how he opens the book in chapter one:

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, (Rev 1:1)

- It is open, not sealed. This coincides with how the book ends:
And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. (Rev 22:10)
- "Little book" comes from the word that is used nearly always for a book of the scriptures.
- As with other scriptures about the Word of God, it is sweet to the taste:

How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (Psa 119:103)

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. (Psa 19:10)

Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. (Eze 3:1-3)

- But it is bitter inwardly. The first use of bitter in the scriptures is with Esau when he wept bitterly because he had forever lost the blessing.

Hebrews records:

For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. (Heb 12:17)

The awesome promises of heaven which we read about in Revelation are indeed sweet but the outpourings that fall upon a world for which no place of repentance is found is terribly bitter.

Finally, John is told that he must prophecy again, and this word for “again” is quite specific – it means a repetition of what has gone before. It is not simply a continuation but a repetition of

something which has preceded.

Now, here’s a thought – the chapter that immediately follows this will deal with two prophets that witness to the world during the tribulation. Names like Moses, Elijah and Enoch are most often considered when this event is presented, but it **may be** that one of those two is John.

- First, one of the powers of the two prophets will be to destroy their adversaries with fire from their mouths. Recall, it was John and his brother James who wanted to call down fire from heaven to devour Jesus’ adversaries in Luke 9.
- Second, they are specifically given power to prophesy and John, in this Rev 10 passage is given the little book and told that he must prophecy **again**.
- Third, John is told that his prophesying will be to *peoples, nations, tongues, and kings* and in the next chapter, after the two witnesses are killed, it is the *peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations* who celebrate.
- Fourth, in Revelation 4, John is told to “Come up here.” In like manner, after three and a half days of lying dead in the street, these two prophets are resurrected and told to, “Come up here.”

Of course, we cannot say for certain, but we will know for sure someday soon. On the near horizon, God’s mighty angel will proclaim, “No more delay!” Praise God!