

Revelation Lesson 10

Revelation Chapter 10

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Introduction: Some consider the tenth chapter of Revelations to be parenthetical in as much as the mighty angel described is not the seventh trumpet angel which would be next in sequence.

In any event, John describes a mighty angel with a little book who when he cried out, seven thunders uttered. John was forbidden to reveal the content of these. The chapter concludes with him taking and eating the little book given to him by the mighty angel.

I. The Angel and the Little Scroll

Rev 10:1 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:

John wrote, 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. The question arises, who is this angel? It is clear, he is not the seventh trumpet angel, for he does not sound until Revelation 11:15. For that reason, some have advanced the position that chapter 10 is another parenthetical chapter. That is a chapter not in the sequential flow of thought, an adjunct to the greater thought development.

There is a remarkable similarity between this “mighty angel come down from heaven” and the glorified Christ described in Revelation 1:13-16. For that reason, some have suggested that perhaps this mighty angel is in fact Jesus.

Rev 1:13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Rev 1:14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

Rev 1:15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

Rev 1:16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

Rev 10:2 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 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. This mighty angel “had in his hand a little book open.” The word translated as little book (bibliaridion bibliaridion) has the idea of a very small scroll, perhaps even a single document.

It is noted as having been opened. Moreover, this mighty angel “set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth.” Though there certainly have been suggestions as to the significance of his right foot on the sea and his left on the land, the text itself does not lend itself to any special significance other than perhaps this angel’s arrival involved the entire earth.

It may be that the content of this little book is what is recorded in 11:1-13. Though that is an interesting thought, there is no textual substance to support that position except that chapter 11 follows sequentially. Revelation 11:15 is the sounding of the seventh trumpet which closes the parenthesis apparently begun in chapter 10.

Rev 10:3 And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

Rev 10:4 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.

Even as Jesus’ voice in 1:15 is likened to “the sound of many waters,” the voice of this mighty angel is “a loud voice, as when a lion roareth.” Power as well as royalty are implied in the voice of this mighty angel. John continued, noting, “and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.” Here is one of the great mysteries of Revelation. John recorded hearing seven thunders.

There already has been the sevenfold sequence of the judgments and six of the seven trumpet judgements. There will soon be the seven vial judgments. It, therefore, may be safely assumed that the seven thunders represent another sevenfold judgment upon the earth. It may be a series of events hidden from Satan will till the time of fulfillment. Of all the symbolism presented (seals, trumpets and soon, vials), thunder is the most ominous of all. It may be the seven thunder judgments are worse than the rest.

If we accept the position that this is a parenthetical chapter, it would then follow, the time of the seven thunder judgments relative to the rest of the Tribulation is uncertain. Conceivably, a case could be made that they are scattered across the entire seven-year period independent of the other judgments.

In Verse 4, John was about to write what the seven thunders uttered and was forbidden to write or reveal the content of the seven thunders. A voice from heaven ordered him to “seal up those things . . . and write them not.” Why he was so instructed, we can only speculate. It may be there are some things God wishes to hide altogether from Satan. He knows Scripture. Here may be something God did not want Satan to read. It may refer to Israel in the Tribulation who will come to know Christ and begin to search the New Testament in that day.

Maybe there is something here God wished to prevent Israel from learning at that time. We can only speculate. There were similar prohibitions given to Paul in II Corinthians 12:4 and to Daniel in Daniel 12:4.

Dan 12:4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

Rev 10:5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

Rev 10:6 And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

John records that this mighty angel then lifted his hand to heaven and swore (as in taking an oath) by Him (1) who lives forever and (2) who created all things. The object of his oath may be Christ Himself. In any event, allegiance is sworn to the eternal God, Creator of all. The essence of his oath is “that there should be time no longer.” The sense likely is, ‘there shall be delay no longer.’ This may be in answer to the question posed by the martyred saints in heaven as recorded in 6:10, “How long, O Lord?”

If we further presume the parenthetical thought ends at Revelation 11:14 and the next event sequentially commences in Revelation 11:15 with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, there is announced that “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In other words, the end of the Tribulation is at hand. Christ’s return in power to assume rule over the earth is near. Thus, there will be delay no longer.

Rev 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

Rev 10:8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

That thought is further reinforced as John wrote, But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. A key to understanding is to recall that this passage likely is a parenthetical thought and not part of the sequential flow of the book. Thus as noted above, delay will be no longer when the seventh trumpet sounds.

At that time, the final stage of the Tribulation is at hand. The mystery of God in the Tribulation soon will be completed. With that thought in mind, it is therefore likely that the final, seven-vial judgments of chapter 16 will take place over a very short period of time. All that has been prophesied through the various prophets of the Old and New Testaments regarding the Tribulation is about to be fulfilled. The culmination thereof is at hand.

Thereafter, in verse 8, John was instructed by the voice speaking to him out of heaven. He was to go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

Rev 10:9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

Rev 10:10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

John thereupon went unto the angel and said, "Give me the little book." He was instructed, "Take it, and eat it up: and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey." The book was small and John was directed to eat it. However, John's eating thereof would be at first sweet to his taste, but bitter within.

All have had the experience of eating something that was pleasant to the taste, but left an upset digestive tract later. Twice it has been noted that this little book was open. It may well be surmised that John therefore read what was written therein. It may be that John was pleased in what he read, however, the aftermath was bitter. If the assumption is that the first portion of the next chapter revealed the contents of the little book, then it might be that John was pleased to

read of the two witnesses and their ministry during the early years of the Tribulation. However, their untimely death and the desecration of their bodies would certainly be upsetting to him.

Others have speculated that the sweetness may have been the judgment of the persecutors of God's people only to find out the day of wrath will focus in large measure upon his brethren, the Jews. It may be the bitterness is his realization of the judgment brought upon Israel during the Tribulation and the sweetness of their eventual conversion to Christ before it is over. But this is all speculation.

The text does not explain either the sweetness nor the bitterness. John thereupon did as instructed and ate the little book. As foretold, it was in his mouth sweet as honey, but left his belly bitter. The word translated as belly here and in verse 9 is (koilia) koilia. It refers to the entire digestive tract.

Rev 10:11 And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

This final comment of the chapter is somewhat enigmatic. John was aged, likely in his nineties. There is no further historical record of him being released from the Isle of Patmos. Nevertheless, the voice from heaven informed him, And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

The scope of his future prophecy is universal for it will be to all peoples, nationalities, languages, and even before kings. The understanding thereof in all likelihood is of his written record. The book of Revelation, as the capstone of the completed New Testament, has indeed gone to all peoples, nations, languages, and even to kings.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be

blessed.