

REVELATION CHAPTER 10

We are in another one of the parenthetical passages in Revelation. If you will remember, we encountered one of these between the six and the seventh seals. Now, we encounter one between the sixth and the seventh trumpets. There are several reasons why the Lord gives us these pauses in the action. One reason is to give the reader a break. We have been studying terrible scenes of tragedy and death. He gives us these pauses to allow us to regroup and gather our emotions. These pauses allow the Lord to give us words of encouragement and comfort.

Another reason He does this is to show everyone Who is truly in control. As you read about the horrors of the Tribulation Period, you might conclude that sin and Satan are in control. But, God steps in to remind us that He is still the Sovereign God of the universe! God wants us to know that regardless of how dark the hour becomes and in spite of what the devil and his crowd might do, God is still on His throne, and He is still in control of all things!

These pauses also serve to focus our attention on the blessed Lamb of God. In the midst of His wrath, we desperately need to be reminded of His great power.

You see, there is one fundamental problem with the world today is that the world leave Jesus out of its calculations and plans. In ancient times, astronomers like Aristotle and Ptolemy believed that the earth was the center of the universe. It wasn't until Copernicus and Kepler discovered that the sun was the center of the solar system and all other things revolved around it, that everything fell into place and began to make sense.

This world has cut Jesus, the Son, out of the picture. The result has been total chaos. When Jesus is restored as the focal point of mankind's attention, then all things will make sense and fall into place.

So, this passage introduces the middle of the tribulation period, and it also serves to place Jesus back on center stage.

The Angel and the Little Scroll

1 Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars. 2 He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion. When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke.

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In this passage, John sees a "***mighty angel***" descending from Heaven. We are not given the identity of this angel. Some people believe it could be Gabriel the archangel. Others say Michael. Some suggest it is Jesus Christ, however for several reasons that is not likely. First, the Greek word for "***another***" indicates another of the same kind. Second, whenever Jesus appears in the Book of Revelation, John gives Him a title that identifies Him as Jesus. Third, other mighty/strong angels appear in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 5:2, 18:21).

Fourth, Jesus would not take the actions described in verses 5-6, raising His right hand and he ***“swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it,...”*** since He is God, Jesus would swear by Himself (Heb. 6:13). Fifth, this angel came down out of heaven to earth. To identify this angel as Christ would be to add a third time Jesus comes to Earth.

Some reasons people think that this angel is Jesus:

1. He Is Clothed With A Cloud – The cloud is symbolic of power/judgment. Clouds are associated with the 2nd coming of Christ in judgment (Rev. 1:7, 14:14-16, Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26, 14:62; Luke 21:27)

In the Old Testament, during the wilderness wanderings, the Lord Himself led His people with a glory cloud through the desert, Ex. 16. He was with them to guide them and guard them. Here in the darkest days the earth, He is still with His people to protect them and lead them.

Dark clouds covered Sinai when Moses received the Law, Ex. 19. God clothed Himself in a glory cloud when He met Moses on the mountain, Ex. 24, 34.

When Jesus ascended back to Heaven, a cloud received Him, Acts 1:9. When He returns, He will do so on the clouds, 1 Thes. 4:16-17; Rev. 1:7. He is clothed with a cloud!

2. He Has A Rainbow Upon His Head – The rainbow is a symbol of the mercy and faithfulness of God. It first appeared in Gen. 9:12-16 after the flood the Lord guaranteed that He would never destroy the earth with water again. It is a symbol of His mercy in the midst of His judgment. The rainbow also appears in Rev. 4, where the throne of God is surrounded with an emerald rainbow.

3. His Face Shines Like The Sun – This a description of His glory! Jesus’ glory came out, Matt. 17:1-8. Matthew tells us that Jesus shone like the sun!

4. His legs are Like Pillars Of Fire – This is a picture of His judgment. When Jesus comes, He is not coming as the Savior. He is coming back as the Sovereign Lord of the universe. He is coming to execute judgment on all those who have rejected Him!

We are told that he is standing with one foot on the land, one foot on the sea. This angel is huge!! This also demonstrates God’s authority to judge the Earth (1 Cor. 10:26), and this is a picture of His dominion over the entire world. In Biblical time, when a person was going to take dominion over a place or a person, he put his foot on it. When God gave Canaan to Israel, He said, every place that the sole of your foot shall walk upon I will give you, (Joshua 1:3). (When Jesus comes again both His feet will be on the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4). Jesus will come back and take the dominion of this world away from Satan.

He has a little book in His hand. This is probably the same book in Rev. 5:1 and then opened in Rev. 6. Some say it is not the same book since it was smaller. However, the book needed to be made smaller so that John could eat it (Rev. 10:9-10).

We are also told that He ***“gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion”***. It is said that the roaring of a lion strikes fear into its prey and paralyzes it. An adult male lion’s roar can be heard as far as five miles away. Lion’s also roar to mark their territory. That is what we are seeing in these verses. The Lord is staking His claim and He is saying, “I am the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. This world is my world. I am reclaiming what belongs to me!” The victorious Jesus laying claim to the planet earth.

He holds in His hand the book, which is the title deed to the world. He has come to take over!

John hears seven thunders speaking. Seven symbolizes completeness/perfection. Thunder is a mark of judgment.

4 And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down."

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John hears seven thunders speaking. Apparently they spoke a language John could understand and he got ready to write down what they were saying, but, the Lord stopped him and told John to seal up those things which he heard the thunders say.

So, what did they say? I do not know! Neither does anyone else! Why write about it if we are not told what they say? God has some things that He wants to keep concealed for the time being. It is probably a blessing that we don't know. He wants us to know that there are just some things in life that are going to remain a mystery. Deut. 29:29, says, *"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God."*

There are thousands of questions in life for which you and do not have answers. Why do good people suffer? Why do babies get sick and die? Why is there so much evil in our world? Why is living holy so hard? We will never have the answers to these and ten thousand other questions this side of Heaven. The best thing we can do is to leave the mysteries with the Lord and trust Him to do right, (Gen. 18:25; Rom. 8:28). Right now, we are looking at the carpet of life from the bottom and it looks like a tangled mess of threads. One day, we will be allowed to look at the carpet from the top. It will make sense then! Paul says, *"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known,"* (1 Cor. 13:12).

5 Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven.6 And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, "There will be no more delay! But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."

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The next voice John hears brings a message that is crystal clear. The Angel tells John that the days of waiting are finished. God is preparing to finish His work and complete His Word. God is preparing to bring His work of judgment and redemption to an end. It appears that sin and Satan are willing the battle. The truth is far different. God's timing is perfect.

I heard about these boys one time who were out playing baseball. A fellow was riding by and stopped and to watch the fellows play for a little bit. He looked over there and he said to one of the little fellows, he said, "Son, how's your team doing?" And he said, "Well, we're not doing so good." He said, "Well what's the score, son?" He said, "They're beating us 23 to nothing." He said, "Boy, that is bad, son, that's just real bad." He said, "Aw, yes sir, but it's not too bad, we ain't got in to bat yet."

The devil is up to bat right now but one of these days God's half of the inning is going to come up and there'll be no more delay. According to God's calendar, soon, God is going to turn the page, tell Gabriel to blow his trumpet and Jesus will return for His church. Then, God will judge the earth, sin and the devil and usher in eternity. It won't be long now! Hallelujah!

8 Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me once more: "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land."9 So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take it and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but 'in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey.' 10 I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour. 11 Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."

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John is told to take the little book out of the hand of the Angel. He is told to eat it, but he is warned that the book will be sweet in his mouth and bitter in his stomach. John does as he is told and finds that the words of the Angel are true. The book was sweet as honey to his taste; but it was bitter in his belly. Then John is told that he is to take the message he has taken in and share it with others who need to hear.

This is a strange passage of Scripture. It does, however, teach a couple of lessons about the Word of God that we need to hear today.

1st. The Word Of God is to become internal/digested/ a part of who we are. The Bible is spiritual food. Jesus said, " It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God," (Matthew 4:4). Jeremiah said, "When your words came to me I ate them. They were my joy and my heart's delight..."(Jer. 15:16). Job said, that he cherished the Word of God more than food (Job 23:12). Peter said, "like newborn babies crave pure spiritual milk so that by it you may grow up" (1 Pet. 2:2)

The Bible is a Book (meat) for the spiritually hungry soul. If we are to be all that God wants us to be, then we are to get into the book and feed upon it daily/often. We are to drink deeply from the Word so that our souls can grow strong in the things of the Lord. We must get into the Bible, for ourselves, every day, just as we have to eat food every day. Are you feeding in the green pastures of this Word as you should? Remember, you are what you eat!

Note: When John swallowed the Book, he found that it was both a blessing and burden. It was sweet and it was bitter at the same time. The sweetness of this Book can be found in its passages about the grace, love and mercy of our God, salvation, forgiveness, etc. When we read of Jesus dying for our sins, Heaven, that He will meet our needs, He will never leave us, and come to take us home some day that is very sweet! When the sinner reads the Bible and repents that is sweeter than words can describe. This is a book filled with sweetness!

However, it is also a Book filled with bitterness. This Book tells us about a Hell that awaits all the lost. This Book tells of judgment, wrath and damnation. It is a bitter book too. It is a bittersweet Book!

John was told to share the message of the Book with others. The same burden has been placed on our shoulders today. We are to take God's Word, and the Good News of Jesus Christ, and share its message with a lost and dying world, (Matt. 28:19-20). God did not give us His Word for our benefit only; He gave us His Word to share with the world. Let us be obedient and go out into the world with the Word of God in our hearts and on our lips to tell a lost world that "Jesus Saves"! Do you need to be saved? Do you need to come home to the Father? Do you need to commit to reading your Bible and sharing the message of Jesus like you should?