

REVELATION 10

I. BKGRD.

We have been going through the trumpet judgments, the 2nd series of catastrophes that have been brought upon the earth. Chapters 10 and 11 are an interlude before the last trumpet is sounded. John gives us now a little insight into a yet future event preparatory to the coming of Jesus Christ to the earth to claim that which he has purchased. Jesus paid the price of redemption -- He redeemed the world so that it would be God's once again. It was originally God's by virtue of creation. God gave it to Man and Man gave it to Satan. Satan is called 3 x's by Jesus the '*Prince (or ruler) of this world*', and by Paul the '*God of this world*' and the "*prince of the power of the air*." The loss of this world was because of Man's sin. Satan said he would give Jesus all the kingdoms of this world, for "*they are mine to give to anyone I want*" -- if only Jesus would bow down and worship him; but Jesus came to redeem the world, and the price was His life, the shedding of His blood.

In contrast to ch. 9, which was dark and dismal, ch. 10 is bright and uplifting as we see what follows the demons' release from the bottomless pit...

II. TEXT -- Chapter 10

v. 1 "**Then**" indicates chronological order, one after another. But the seventh trumpet does not sound until 11:15. The opening of the 7th seal was preceded by two visions (Rev. 7:1ff.) and so here the sounding of the 7th trumpet (cf. 11:15) is preceded by the visions of chs. 10 and 11.

- "**Angel**" (ἄγγελος) means messenger. The Greek tells us what kind of angel: *allos*; "**another**" angel of a different kind. Last angels mentioned are in 9:1, and 13. Some think this "**angel**" (messenger) is Jesus -- the description here has similarities to the one of Jesus in the first chapter, vv. 13-16.
- Several similarities; several differences. The Greek argues for it being another angel as the different kind from the angels in 9:1 and 13. Pillars of "**fire**" and "**cloud**" guided Israel in the wilderness and represented the Presence of God among His people (Exodus 13:21-22; 14:19,24). The "**rainbow**" was a sign of God's promise to never again destroy the earth with a flood (Gen. 9:8-17); it is a reminder of grace even in judgment.
- Though Christ appears frequently as "*the Angel of the LORD*" (YHWH) in the OT (e.g., Gen. 16, 24, 31; Judges 6), there is no evidence that this person is anyone other than a "*mighty angel*" such as we find in Rev. 5:2, perhaps Michael the archangel.
- **Nowhere in the NT is Jesus called or referred to as an "angel."** Having been in the Presence of God, this angel simply radiates the glory of God -- sounds like Jesus, but probably isn't. God the Father said, "*Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet*" (Psalm 110:1). So Jesus is still at the right hand of the Father and doesn't return to earth until all enemies have been conquered (Rev. 19).
- Psalm 110:1 Jesus is at the right hand of the Father: "*The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'.*"

v. 2 In contrast with the seven-sealed scroll (*biblion*) held by the Lamb (5:1), this angel held a small scroll (*biblaridion*). This scroll apparently contained the angel's written order for the mission he was about to fulfill.

This is NOT the same scroll we saw in ch. 5: that scroll was the title deed to planet earth and its contents were to be revealed as each of the successive seals were broken;

- This scroll is to be eaten.
- Also, the term "**little scroll**" sets this one apart from the other.

This scroll is the ultimate destiny of Mankind and all Creation: the prospects of the coming kingdom and the eternal state are "**sweet**," but preceding them are the most severe ("**bitter**") judgments yet: the "vial" or "bowl" judgments of Rev. 16.

One foot on the dry land and one foot in the sea indicates his tremendous size and symbolizes that his coming has something to do with the destiny of all creation (cf. v. 6).

v. 3 "Roar like a lion" -- While Jesus is described as the "*lion of the tribe of Judah*" (Rev. 5:5), the cherub in Rev. 4:7 was like a lion; Rev. 13 has the Antichrist with the "*mouth of a lion*." Lion doesn't automatically mean Jesus, although some insist this fulfills OT prophecies regarding Jesus.

"Seven thunders" – in chs. 8, 11, and 16 thunder is connected with divine punishment as it was in Egypt when the plague of hail struck (Exodus 9:23 "thunder"). Here, too, it anticipates the judgment to fall upon those that refuse God's love and grace. Thunder is the voice of God:

Ps. 29:1-9 "A psalm of David. Ascribe to the LORD, O mighty ones, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness. The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD thunders over the mighty waters. The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is majestic. The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, Sirion like a young wild ox. The voice of the LORD strikes with flashes of lightning. The voice of the LORD shakes the desert; the LORD shakes the Desert of Kadesh. The voice of the LORD twists the oaks and strips the forests bare. And in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

v. 4 The prophet Daniel in the OT was told to seal up his prophecies until the last times (Dan. 8:26; 12:4,9), when they would be opened. In Rev. 22:10 John is told NOT to seal up the prophecies given to him because the time of their fulfillment was "near"! What the seven thunders said will not be revealed until their proper time.

There is a blessing in NOT knowing . . . after an intense and careful study of this passage, I have to come to the conclusion... I DON'T KNOW! I have become comfortable in the fact that I don't know everything... "*the secret things belong to the LORD*" (Dt. 29:29). Why would He keep things from us? Four possibilities:

- Not knowing keeps us HUMBLE. When I think I know everything, pride and self-sufficiency seem to creep in. Not knowing takes the pressure off me... and keep me obedient to the Scripture, which commands, "*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean NOT unto your own understanding...*" (Prov. 3:5-6).
- Not knowing keeps us useful, and directed; I can only master a few things...
- Not knowing keeps us STABLE: I trust instead of trying to understand. I don't know WHY, or HOW, but I do know WHO!

vv. 5-6 Like the taking of an oath to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you, God" in a court of law today. Raising one's right hand toward a god was used in solemn oath formulas in Greek culture as well as in the Old Testament and later Jewish literature. Here John alludes to Daniel 12:7, where an "*angel lifted his hands toward heaven and swore by the one who lives forever that there would be only three and a half more years until the end*"; here this angel swears that the time has come, and there is no further delay.

The KJV rendering, "There shall be time no longer," has been mistakenly interpreted as an abolishment of the present time system with its sequence of events. That's not the thought of the passage, as the NIV translation is accurate. *Chronos* can mean "time" as we know it, or "**delay**". There will be no more "**delay**" in the fulfillment of the seventh trumpet (verse 7), in answer to the question, "*How long?*" asked by the Tribulation saints martyred (6:9-11).

God has delayed taking over the world for a long time. God is still waiting today. We pray, "*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*" (Matthew 6:10). But God has delayed His coming. At this point the Lord declares, "**There shall be no more delay!**"

The clear reference to God as Creator answers evolutionary speculation as to the origin of the earth.

v. 7 Here apparently the whole purpose of God in human history is meant. The Kingdom of Christ and the eternal state beyond are "**mysteries**" we only have the briefest glimpse of in Scripture. Just as the now 2,000 year Church age was a "**mystery**" in the OT, so the future state is to us in large part.

The reference, therefore, is not to hidden truth but to the fulfillment of many Old Testament passages which refer to the glorious return of the Son of God and the establishment of His kingdom of righteousness and peace on the earth. The “**mystery**” was HOW and WHEN God was going to redeem the planet from sin.

v. 8 John went to the mighty angel and asked for the little book He was holding.

v. 9 The angel said, “**Eat it.**” (Ezek. 3:1,3 the prophet told to eat it and fill his belly with it). Talk about absorbing, or “digesting,” a book! (is this the *Reader’s Digest* version?). Eating a book is the reading of it, the assimilation of it; the book becomes a part of you. As you read it, in your mouth it’s sweet because the things that it promises are great; but when you digest it, those things which must transpire before the fulfillment of its promises are very bitter and difficult to consider. These are the bitter tragedies and the sufferings the world must experience in the opening of the seven seals, trumpets and bowls of Revelation prior to the establishment of the kingdom of God.

The “Good News” (the Gospel) is only “good news” for those that inherit its blessings; to those that reject God’s offer of love, grace and forgiveness the “Good News” is really “BAD news;” they will find His judgments a “bitter” pill to swallow! In fact, ALL MINISTRY is both joy and sadness, blessings and bitterness.; a ‘Jeremiah’-kind of ministry. And all His delays are the result of His patience; God never delights in judgment, though His holiness and justice DEMAND it!

David stated, “*The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb*” (Ps. 19:9-10). Though the Word is sweet to believers, it will be bitter to unbelievers when it brings divine judgment on them.

v. 11 Having watched the Denver Broncos for many years, you MUST know that, “**It’s not over till it’s OVER!**” There’s still work to be done! The angel told John that he must prophesy again before many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings: more prophecies follow the sounding of the 7th Trumpet in 11:15.

III. SUMMARY / APPLICATION / RESPONSE

A. Many today struggle with the idea of “delay” -- Why does God delay? Why are not all our prayers answered instantaneously? The word “wait” is mentioned some 92 x’s in the NIV Bible.

- Psalm 27:14 “*Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.*”
- God is teaching us patience, perseverance and to trust (Prov. 3:5-6). James reminds us, “*you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything*” (James 1:3-4).
- “*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance*” (2 Peter 3:9).

B. Eating the Word of God . . . it fills and satisfies like nothing else can!

- the number of new Bibles that are sold, given away, or otherwise distributed in the United States is about 168,000 per day.
- The Bible can be read aloud in 70 hours.
- BIBLE STATISTICS (KJV): Number of books in the Bible: 66 Chapters: 1,189 Verses: 31,102 Words: 783,137 Letters: 3,116,480 Number of promises given in the Bible: 1,260 Commands: 6,468 Predictions: over 8,000 Fulfilled prophecy: 3,268 verses Unfulfilled prophecy: 3,140.

C. The mysteries of God – the who, what, why, when and where will become plain...in time!

2 Peter 3:10-14 *“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”*
