

**Revelation #28****February 19, 2023****Series Title: The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Behold I Am Coming Soon****Today's Message: The Mighty Angel and the Little Scroll/ Book; Revelation 10:1-11**

Chapter 10 brings us to an interlude, a pause between the sixth trumpet and the seventh trumpet, which contains the seven final bowl judgments of the seventh seal! This interlude has two parts including the Mighty Angel and the Little Scroll/ Book, and The Ministry of the Two Witnesses. And, at the conclusion of the second half of the interlude— in 11:14, we're told that now the "second woe has passed; the third woe is coming soon."

Why this interlude?

To strengthen and keep the faith and hope of suffering believers living through these terrible woes.

It is critical that we understand that all Scripture is God-breathed and written to teach us what is right, show us what is wrong, teach how to get right, and to teach us how to stay right (2 Tim. 3:16). In the same way, Paul writes in Romans 15:4 that "Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."

John MacArthur takes notice of this. He writes, "These interludes encourage God's people in the midst of the fury and horror of divine judgment, and remind them that God is still in sovereign control of all events. During the interludes God comforts His people with the knowledge that He has not forgotten them, and that they will ultimately be victorious."<sup>1</sup>

This should encourage us this very day with the confidence that He will see our salvation through to glory. For as Hebrews 7:25 say, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him (Jesus Christ), seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

The theme of this chapter, according to Tony Garland, is God's declared intention and right to take possession of the whole earth—land and sea— dislodging the grip of the ancient usurper, the devil, and establishing God's kingdom on earth; just as the Scripture has predicted.

The mighty angel in this chapter seems to be the primary focus and the little scroll observed by John is fully opened revealing the terrors of the judgments yet to come.

So, this week, **The Mighty Angel and the Little Scroll**; and the next sermon from Chapter 11, **The Ministry of the Two Witnesses**.

### **I. (10:1-7) The Mighty Angel**

#### **A. (10:1a) John saw another mighty angel**

1. Is this mighty angel a mighty angel or is it the Lord Jesus Christ?

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<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur, *John MacArthur Explains the Book of Revelation: Because the Time is Near*; (Moody Publishers, 2007) p171

- a) The phrase “mighty angel” in 10:1 uses the same two Greek words describing a “strong angel in Revelation 5:2
    - (1) That angel asks the question, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?”
      - (a) In Revelation 5:5 the elder turns John’s attention to the One who is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals. He says to John, “See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”
  - b) It is unlikely that this mighty angel in 10:1 is Christ.
    - (1) Until Christ, the Lamb, rides forth in Revelation 19:11, He is in heaven opening the seals and instigating the judgments. Only after the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls does He ride forth bodily to initiate His kingdom reign on earth.
  - c) This angel is called, “another mighty angel.”
    - (1) He is *another* angel *similar* to other angels.
2. Our Lord Jesus Christ is different from angels.
- a) In Revelation when John sees Christ appearing he gives Him titles which define His uniqueness.
    - (1) See Revelation 1:3; 1:13; 1:17; 1:18; 2:18; 3:7; 3:14; 5:5; 6:1,16; 7:17; 8:1; 19:11; 19:13; 19:16
  - b) If this angel was Christ it is reasonable to conclude that John would have identified Him with a title fitting for His person!<sup>2</sup>
3. Garland concludes, “It is our view that this angel is not Christ, but a *divine emissary* whose great glory and declarative actions indicate that he is acting in the authority of God and asserting the right and intention of God to reclaim the globe in the judgments which will follow...this angel is not divine.”
- B. (10:1b) “coming down from heaven...robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars.”
- 1. “Coming down from heaven”
    - a) This could be one of the “presence angels” standing before God (8:2)
      - (1) Some speculate that this could be the mighty angel Michael, which means, “he is like God”.
  - 2. “...robed in a cloud”
    - a) Divine presence and authority, but not divine himself.
  - 3. “...a rainbow above his head”
    - a) An emblem of God’s covenant faithfulness to protect His people who are living through the terrible judgments.
      - (1) A reassurance to God’s people of His mercy in the midst of judgment.
  - 4. “...his face like the sun”
    - a) Radiant glory for all the world to see
  - 5. “...legs like fiery pillars”
    - a) Indicates judgment. As he stands on the earth the nations will be judged.

C. (10:2a) “He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand.”

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<sup>2</sup> MacArthur, *ibid*

1. The little scroll/ book was opened in his hand.
    - a) A little book because it contained a lesser portion of the overall content contained in the seven-sealed scroll, which only the Lamb could open.
      - (1) Only the Lamb could open the seven-sealed scroll (5:3)
        - (a) John would not have been able to “take the scroll” as he does in 10:8.
      - (2) This little book could be consumed and digested by John. It is unlikely that John could have done this with the Lamb’s scroll.
- D. (10:2b-3) “He planted his left foot on the sea and his right foot on the land, and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion. When he shouted, the voice of the seven thunders spoke.”
1. This angel, which John saw, was very massive in size.
    - a) Demonstrating God’s sovereign right to judge the whole earth.
    - b) His standing is a prelude to the coming bowl judgments.
    - c) And, God’s right to take back all that the Usurper, the devil stole.
  2. He roared with a loud voice like the roar of a lion
    - a) Judgment is Scripture is often connected with a loud roar
      - (1) Jeremiah 25:30: “The Lord will roar from on high; He will thunder from His holy dwelling and roar mightily against His land.”
      - (2) Also, Hosea 11:10; Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2; 3:8
  3. As he shouted the seven thunders spoke/ raised their voices
    - a) The seven thunders are probably representing God’s voice thundering the voice of judgment upon the whole earth.
      - (1) God’s thunder: Rev. 8:15; 11:19; 16:18; 1 Sam.2:10; 2 Sam. 22:14
      - (2) Judgment upon sinful earth and also signaling rescue of His people!
- E. (10:4) John was forbidden to write down what the seven thunders spoke
1. The command originated from God
  2. Fruitless to speculate what the thunders spoke.
    - a) These are the only words sealed shut in Revelation.
- F. (10:5-7) The angel vows a solemn promise
1. He swore a vow in the Name of God stresses God’s sovereign right to govern over all creation and judge it as He sees fit, in keeping with His holiness.
    - a) There will be no delay in finishing God’s judgment.
    - b) When? “In the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet.” (10:7)
      - (1) A period of time beginning in 11:15
      - (2) Concluding with the seven bowl judgments of Revelation 16:1-21
  2. (10:7b) The mystery of God will be accomplished, **just as He announced to His servants the prophets.**
    - a) The mystery will mean the consummation of God’s plan in bringing His glorious Kingdom in Christ to fulfillment!

- b) This is the hope of every believer living during the Tribulation who have been overrun by demons and disasters! That God's plan is being fulfilled. And, that they have not believed in vain!
  - (1) It includes
    - (a) The salvation of all the elect of God through all time.
    - (b) The judgment of men and demons
    - (c) The revealing of the new heavens and new earth and their place in God's eternal kingdom!

## II. (10:8-11) The Little Scroll

- A. (10:8-9a) That *voice* John heard from heaven in 10:4 spoke once more:
  - 1. (10:8) Commanded John to *participate* not just observe
    - a) "Go and take the scroll from the hand of the angel..."
      - (1) John is called to *participate* as in other parts of the Revelation
        - (a) Rev. 1:17: John is told to write what he saw.
        - (b) Rev 4:1: John is commanded to "come up here"
        - (c) Rev. 5:4-5: John weeps and is comforted by an elder;
        - (d) Rev. 7:13-14: John speaks with an elder
    - b) The angel who stands on land and sea
      - (1) This massive angel acting as God's divine emissary
      - (2) This is the third reference to the angel standing on land and sea
        - (a) 10:2, 5 and now 10:8
  - 2. (10:9a) John goes to take it, but asks first!
    - a) John was commanded by the voice from heaven. But his tentative request is revealing.
      - (1) Certainly this mighty angel was terrifying in his authority
    - b) But John does ask the angel for the little scroll.
- B. (10:9b-10) John is commanded to *take it* and *eat it*, and he obeys by taking and eating.
  - 1. The mighty angel addressed John's reluctance to even touch the scroll by commanding him here.
    - a) And, John is told that it will taste sweet, but turn sour/bitter once eaten.
  - 2. John took it and ate it. It was both sweet to the taste, and bitter when digested.
    - a) This event mirrors Ezekiel's obedience to eat the scroll of judgment that had written on it words of "lament, mourning, and woe." (Eze.2:9-3:3)
  - 3. The eating of the scroll symbolized absorbing and digesting God's Word.
    - a) Ps. 19:10b: The Word of God is "sweeter than honey"
    - b) Jer. 15:16: "When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear Your name."
    - c) Eze. 3:1-3: "'Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the house of Israel.' So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll. Then He said to me, 'Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.' So I ate it, and it tasted sweet as honey in my mouth.'"
  - 4. So, John ate and digested the very words of God concerning the remaining judgments coming upon the earth and of the Lord removing the usurper and reclaiming all of His creation!
    - a) The words of redemption was sweet

- b) The words which paint the reality of final judgment was bitter
- C. (10:11) After eating and digesting John is commanded to once again prophecy
  - 1. "Again". He was first commanded to "Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later." (1:19)
  - 2. Now, he is being recommissioned to faithfully write the rest of the prophecies God would give him.
    - a) See how important this recommissioning was? The terrible judgments to come might cause John to capitulate. But, this recommissioning would give him the nerve, the boldness to write the prophecies concerning the judgments coming upon many peoples, nations, languages and kings."

### III. Application: The Sweet Message of the Gospel and Bitter Reality of Divine Judgment

- A. John's interaction with the mighty angel is applicable.
  - 1. The *voice* from heaven had commanded John to take the scroll. Only John's trust in the command of the Lord could move him to approach such a mighty being.
    - a) Walter Scott in his commentary on Revelation wrote the following for our encouragement: "The soul who is obedient— who yields unquestioning submission to the expressed will of God— is for the moment omnipotent. He walks and acts in the strength of the Creator—the maker of heaven and earth. Fear? he knows it not! The invisible God, seen by faith, makes him invincible in the path of obedience— 'immortal till his work is done.'"
      - (1) How well do you know the expressed will of God?
  - 2. John was told to *take it* and *eat it*; All of it!
    - a) Remember that we are to eat and devour the Word of God! It is good!
      - (1) Jer. 15:16: "...they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear Your name!
        - (a) Pray that the Word would be your joy and delight.
      - (2) Jeremiah reminds us of an important point: We bear the Lord's Name!
        - (a) Everytime we take communion we are reminded that we belong to God through the body and blood of Christ!
          - When we *take* and *eat* bread and cup we are partaking in the life of Christ, the Word of God!
        - (b) Your spiritual life is birthed and sustained by the Lord Jesus who is "*The Bread of Life*". (see John 6:27-35,48)
- B. The scroll was both sweet and sour/bitter
  - 1. Sweet! Because those of us who love Jesus Christ long for His return in glory. We long for Satan to finally be destroyed. And we long for His kingdom and His rule to be established forever!
  - 2. Bitter! Because the ensuing final judgments will mean the final judgment and separation of ungodly men and women forever. That is the bitter message!
- C. But, John was recommissioned to prophecy concerning the whole counsel of God. Woe be to the preachers who refuse to warn the ungodly of a coming judgment for rebellion against He who sits on the throne and of the Lamb of God, our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - 1. It won't make us popular, but we have a responsibility to warn people of judgment coming upon all who refuse such a great salvation in Christ!