

The Little Scroll
Revelation 10:1-11
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INTRODUCTION

1. Please turn in your Bibles this morning to Revelation chapter 10.
2. We now come to an interlude that covers from 10:1-11:14.
3. This interlude falls between the sixth and seventh trumpet judgments.
4. Just as the seals and the bowl judgments have a brief interlude between their sixth and seventh judgments (7:1-17; 16:15) so does the sixth and seventh trumpet.
5. Read Revelation 10:1-11.
6. In our last study together in this book we saw the blowing of the sixth trumpet.
7. One event that occurred at the end of this trumpet was the salvation of Israel.
8. Daniel 9:24 says, “Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.”
9. Once this 70th week is fulfilled, the remnant of Israel will be saved.

10. The 70th week of Daniel began with the signing of the covenant in Daniel 9:27.
11. This is followed by the first seal in Revelation 6:1-2 and Matthew 24:5.
12. This 7 year period would take us all the way to the end of the sixth trumpet judgment in the 7th seal or the Day of the Lord's wrath.
13. Our completion of the sixth trumpet judgment marked the end of Daniel's prophecy known as the 70th week of Daniel.
14. Daniel 12 sheds more light on this when Daniel says in verse 7, "Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time (1260 days); and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished."
15. Verse 10-11 says, "Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days."
16. The extra 30 days is where the blowing of the seventh trumpet will occur and the seven bowl judgments will take place. Also during this time will be the great battle of Armageddon and the final destruction of the Antichrist.
17. Verse 12 mentions another 45 days when it says, "Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days." This will be the period of preparation

for the Millennium.

18. So the next feature on God's timetable is the blowing of the 7th trumpet which will reveal the seven bowl judgments.
19. But first the interlude in chapter 10:1-11:14.
20. In chapter 10 we see 5 unusual features that will prepare us for the final trumpet blast.
21. The first is the unusual angel found in verse 1.

I. An Unusual Angel (vv.1-2a)

John begins this chapter just as he has done previously by stating what he “saw.” The word *eidon* “marks the beginning of a new vision” (MacArthur). But this time John sees something he hasn’t seen in the previous visions.

He says, “And 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. And he had a little book open in his hand” (vv.1-2a).

A. This “Mighty Angel” is Different Than That of 5:2

1. John says he saw “another” mighty angel
2. We should also note that this angel is distinctive from the seven angels who sound the seven trumpets

B. This “Mighty Angel” Has Similarities Between His Description and that of Christ in 1:12-17

1. He, like Christ, descends in a cloud (1:7)

Warren Wiersbe says, “The fact that the angel’s face is ‘as the sun’ corresponds to the description of Jesus Christ in Revelation 1:16; his feet correspond to the Lord’s description in Revelation 1:15. His voice like a lion suggests Revelation 5:5. This being could well be our Lord Jesus Christ, appearing to John as a kingly angel. Jesus often appeared in the Old Testament as ‘the Angel of the Lord’ (Ex. 3:2; Jud. 2:4; 6:11-12, 21-22; 2 Sam. 24:16). This was a temporary manifestation for a special purpose, not a permanent incarnation” (The Bible exposition commentary).

2. Several factors argue against that identification
 - a) First, the use of allos (another of the same kind) identifies this angel as one exactly like the previously mentioned trumpet angels. If Christ were being referred here, the word heteros (another of a different kind) would be expected, since Christ is essentially different from angels. Christ could not be described as an angel exactly like the other angels, since they are created and He is the uncreated, eternal God.
 - b) Second, whenever Jesus Christ appears in Revelation John gives Him an unmistakable title.
 - (1) “The faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth” (1:5)
 - (2) “The Son of man” (1:13)
 - (3) “the living One” (1:18)
 - (4) “The Son of God” (2:18)
 - (5) “He who is holy, who is true” (3:7)
 - (6) “the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God” (3:14)
 - (7) “the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David” (5:5)

- (8) The Lamb (6:1,16;7:17;8:1)
- (9) “Faithful and True” (19:11)
- (10) “The Word of God” (19:13)
- (11) “King of kings and Lord of lords”
(19:16)

It is reasonable to assume that if Christ were the angel in view here He would be distinctly identified.

- c) Third, other strong angels, who clearly cannot be identified with Christ, appear in Revelation (5:2; 18:21). Since other angels are so designated, there is no compelling reason to associate that title with Jesus Christ. Further, while the preincarnate Christ appeared in the Old Testament as the Angel of the Lord, the New Testament nowhere refers to Him as an angel.
 - d) Fourth, it is inconceivable that Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, could make the oath that this angel makes in verses 5 and 6. Since He is God, the risen, glorified Lord Jesus Christ would swear by Himself.
 - e) Finally, this angel came down out of heaven to the earth. To identify him as Christ is to add another coming of Christ to the earth unforeseen elsewhere in Scripture.
3. There are other angels in Scripture that have the same splendor that this angel has

- a) Lucifer - Ezek.28:11-15
- b) Daniel saw a vision of an angel, whom he described as “a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude” (Dan.10:5-6).

4. Having introduced this powerful angel, John describes his spectacular attire (v.1a)

- a) He was “clothed with a cloud” – “This was a symbol of majesty and glory” (Barnes). “Clouds are associated with the second coming of Christ in judgment in 1:7; 14:14-16; Mat.24:30; Mk.13:26; 14:62; and Lk.21:27” (MacArthur).

The word “clothed” (*periballo*) means “to cast about, to be clothed, to be enveloped. This word is used of encircling or throwing an embankment around a city, or clothing someone, and in the context it indicates that the angel is encircled by a cloud” (Ford, quoted by Fritz Rienecker, *Linguistic Key to the Greek NT*, p.834).

So being “clothed with a cloud” is “the emblem of God coming in judgment” (JFB).

- b) “A rainbow was on his head” – “*Iris* (rainbow) was the Greek goddess who personified the rainbow, and served as a messenger of the gods. In classical Greek *iris*

was used to describe any bright halo surrounding another object, such as the circle surrounding the eyes on a peacock's tail, or the iris of the eye" (Marvin Vincent, Vincent's Word Studies in the NT).

"Here it describes the brilliant, many-colored rainbow around the angel's head that reflects his glorious splendor. The same word that was used in 4:3 to describe the rainbow that encircled the throne of God" (John MacArthur, Revelation 1-11, p.280).

The "rainbow...on his head" was the "sign of God's covenant" (Believer's Bible Commentary).

"Perhaps God included this to remind John, that even in judgment, He will always remember His Noahic Covenant and protect His own" (John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible).

5. Following the angel's attire John now describes his appearance (v.1b)
 - a) "His face was like the sun" – this is similar to the angel in 18:1 and is "an expression of unveiled glory" (Believer's Bible Commentary).

"His brilliant, radiant glory, far surpassing that of Moses (cf. Ex.34:29-35), lit up the earth like the blazing noonday sun (cf.18:1)" (MacArthur) and was "so intensely glorious that it could not be looked on" (Clarke).

- b) “His feet like pillars of fire” – This “symbolizes his unbending holiness in stamping out his judgment on the earth, pictured here as *fire* that consumes the ungodly (cf. Mal.4:1)” (MacArthur).

The pillars are speaking of “strength and the fire of judgment” (Believer’s Bible Commentary).

“The angel, as representative of Christ, reflects His glory and bears the insignia attributed in Rev.1:15-16; Rev.4:3, to Christ Himself” (JFB).

- 6. John now says that the angel “had a little book open in his hand” (v.2a)
 - a) The “little book” (bibliaridion) is “a very small book” (Rienecker) or “scroll” (UBS). This is not to be distinguished from the scroll in chapter 5 but “merely adds a further description of it in his vision. The book needed to be made smaller for the sake of the symbolism of this vision, since John was to eat it” (MacArthur).
 - b) This “little book” is said to be “open in his hand.” The use of perfect participle (heneogmenon) “emphasizes the idea of the scroll being open; having been opened, it is to remain open” (MacArthur).

This book “unveils all the terrors of divine judgment yet to come” (MacArthur).

II. An Unusual Act (vv.2b-3)

A. The Angel Set His Right Foot on the Sea and His Left Foot on the Land (v.2b)

1. This shows his massive size from the perspective of John's vision
2. Since no limitation is given in describing the sea and land, this action of the angel demonstrates God's sovereign authority to judge the entire earth, which He will soon take back from the usurper, Satan
 - a) Ps.24:1 speaks of His sovereign authority when it says, "The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it" (NASB).

"Although Satan has temporarily usurped the sea and the earth, this symbolic act demonstrates that all creation belongs to the Lord and He rules it with sovereign authority" (John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible).

- b) Ps.22:28 says, "For the kingdom is the LORD'S, and He rules over the nations."
- c) Ps.29:10 says, "The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood, and the LORD sits as King forever."

Robert Mounce says, "The visual impact is that of an enormous and resplendent angel descending from heaven and standing astride both sea and

land. This dramatic appearance of an authoritative figure from heaven stands in marked contrast to the immediately preceding tableau of man's rebellious idolatry and immorality (9:20-21)" (The Book of Revelation, p.208).

B. The Angel Cries With a Loud Voice (v.3a)

1. In keeping with his huge size, the angel "cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars"

His loud cry reflects the power, majesty, and authority of God.

2. The Old Testament prophets also connect a loud, lionlike roaring voice with judgment
 - a) Jeremiah predicted in Jeremiah 25:30 that the "The Lord will roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold. He will give a shout, as those who tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth."
 - b) Hosea wrote that "the Lord...will roar like a lion; indeed He will roar" (Hos.11:10 - NASB).
 - c) In Joel 3:16 it says that "the Lord roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble" (NASB).

"This does not mean that the voice of the angel was incoherent yelling. Rather, he was speaking clearly but with great volume to capture attention

and cause fear. What the angel actually said is record in 10:6" (John MacArthur, Revelation 1-11, p.282).

Robert Mounce says that "the Greek verb translated 'roareth' is commonly used to denote the mooing of cattle" and "suggests that the angel's voice had a deep resonance which would demand the attention of those who heard" (The Book of Revelation, p.208).

Leon Morris offers these words of encouragement when he says, "The world despised Christians as members of a little, insignificant church. It held all that they stood for as of no account. But their faith was based on the Word of God and that word is in the hands of this colossal figure, who, though only dimly seen through the enveloping cloud, spans both land and sea. God's Word is supremely significant. It towers above all the affairs of men" (Revelation, p.134).

- C. After the Angel Cried Out, Seven Thunders Uttered Their Voices (v.3b)
1. Seven speaks of completeness, finality, and perfection
 2. Thunder is often what announces God's judgment in Scripture
 - a) Rev.8:5
 - b) Rev.11:16-18
 - c) Hannah in her prayer in 1 Samuel 2:10 said, "The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken in pieces; from heaven He will

thunder against them. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth.”

- d) After David was delivered from “all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul,” he spoke “to the LORD this song” and said in 2 Samuel 22:14-15:

“The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered His voice. He sent out arrows and scattered them; lightning bolts, and He vanquished them.”

- e) Exodus 9:23 records that “Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt.”

- 3. These seven loud, shattering, powerful voices cry out for vengeance and judgment upon the sinful earth
- 4. The thunder was separate from the angel’s voice and may have represented the voice of God. The text does not say what the thunder said, but hearing it certainly would have added to the terror of the scene of judgment

III. An Unusual Answer (v.4)

- A. The Seven Thunders Did Not Merely Make a Loud Noise But Communicated Information John Was About to Write

- 1. In obedience to God’s commands, John had

already written much of what he saw in his visions

- a) In chapter 1, verses 10-11 John relates that he “was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, “What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”
 - b) Later in that chapter the risen, glorified Lord Jesus Christ commanded John in 1:19 to “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.”
 - c) John was also specifically commanded to write each of the letters to the seven churches (2:1,8,12,18; 3:1,7,14)
 - d) Later in Revelation, John would once again be commanded to write what he saw in his visions (14:13; 19:9; 21:5)
2. Before John could record the message of the seven thunders he “heard a voice from heaven saying to me, ‘Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them” (v.4)
- a) Whether the voice was that of the Father, Jesus Christ, or another angel is not revealed
 - b) The command, however, clearly originated

with God – the very One who had commanded John to write (cf.22:10)

- c) It is not revealed why John was forbidden to record the message of the seven thunders. It may be they were too terrifying to be revealed.
- d) Daniel also was forbidden to record certain elements of his vision

Dan.8:26 says, “And the vision of the evenings and mornings which was told is true; therefore seal up the vision, for it refers to many days in the future.”

Later he was told in 12:9 to “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”

- e) The apostle Paul was “caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which is not lawful for a man to utter” (2 Cor.12:4).

B. There Are Some Truths that God Has Chosen Not to Reveal

Deuteronomy 29:29 says, “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

There are the only words in the book of Revelation that are sealed

IV. An Unusual Announcement (vv.5-7)

A. John Now Sees the Angel Lift Up His Right Hand to Heaven (v.5)

1. This was the standard gesture for taken a solemn vow
 - a) Deut.32:40 says, “For I lift My hand to heaven, and say, As I live forever.”
 - b) Dan.12:7 says, “Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.”
2. To take such a vow is to affirm before God that one is going to speak the truth
 - a) The Bible does not forbid the taking of vows, but rather the evasive swearing of oaths with the intent to deceive (as the Scribes and Pharisees did; Mat.23:16-22)
 - b) Scripture records the oaths of godly people like Abraham (Gen.21:25-31), Isaac (Gen.26:26-31), David (1 Sam.20:12-17), and the apostle Paul (Acts 18:18). God Himself also took oaths (Gen.22:16-18).
3. That vow indicated that what the angel was about to say was of the utmost importance and truth

B. John Hears The Angel Make His Vow (v.6)

Verse 6 says he “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.”

1. This phrase stresses God’s eternity and His sovereign power in and over every single thing in His creation
2. It identifies God as the ultimate cause of all that is

Rev.4:11 says, “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.”

3. The angel could swear by no One greater
4. The specific content of the angel’s oath was “that there should be delay no longer” (v.6)

C. When the Seventh Angel Sounds the Mystery of God Will Be Finished (v.7)

1. The “mystery of God” of which the angel spoke is that of “the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth” (Eph.1:10, NASB)
2. It is the consummation of God’s plan in bringing His glorious kingdom in Christ to fulfillment
 - a) It involves the salvation of the elect and their

place in His glorious kingdom and all that goes with that

- b) It includes the judgment of men and demons
3. The *mystery* previously hidden refers to all the unknown details that are revealed from this point to the end of Revelation, when the new heavens and the new earth are created

John MacArthur says, “To believers living at that time in a world overrun by demons, murder, sexual immorality, drug abuse, thefts, and unparalleled natural disasters, the realization that God’s glorious plan is on schedule, the promised kingdom is near, when ‘the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea’ (Hab.2:14), will bring great comfort and hope in the midst of judgment” (Revelation 1-11, pp.286-287).

V. The Unusual Assignment (vv.8-11)

- A. The Voice John Heard Earlier From Heaven Forbidding Him to Record the Words of the Seven Thunders Spoke to Him Again (v.8)

- 1. The voice said to him, “Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth.”

Robert Mounce says, “That the voice is a voice from heaven emphasizes the authoritative nature of the command. The Seer would be reluctant to approach a great and glorious angel without specific instructions from One even greater” (The

Book of Revelation, pp.213-214).

2. In verse 9 John gives a graphic illustration of what a proper response on the part of believers to God's impending judgment should be
 - a) He "went to the angel and said to him, 'Give me the little book.'"
 - b) "And he said to me, 'Take and eat it.' – And that is exactly what John did in verse 10
 - c) The angel said it would "make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth."

"For the believer, it is sweet to read of God's determination to glorify His Son where He was once crucified. It is sweet to read of the triumph of God over Satan and all his hosts. It is sweet to read of the time when the wrongs of earth will all be made right. But there is bitterness also connected with the study of prophecy. There is the bitterness of self-judgment which the prophetic Scriptures produce. There is the bitterness of viewing the judgments which must soon fall on apostate Judaism and Christendom. And there is the bitterness of contemplating the eternal doom of all who reject the Savior" (Believer's Bible Commentary).

B. The Act of Eating the Scroll Symbolized the Absorbing and Assimilating of God's Word

1. John was commanded to eat the little book, that is,

he was to read and meditate on the judgments recorded in it

2. When John took in the divine word concerning the remaining judgments as the Lord took possession of the universe, he found the words written on the little book both sweet as honey and bitter
3. In keeping with the bittersweet experience, John was told, “You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings” (v.11)
 - a) “Again” means John was commissioned a second time (1:19) to write the rest of the prophecies God was going to give him
 - b) What he was about to learn would be more devastating than anything yet revealed – and more glorious

CONCLUSION

1. John is to warn of all the bitter judgments coming in the seventh trumpet and the seven bowls.
2. What about you?
3. Are you warning of what is yet to come.