

REVELATION 10

(APOCALYPSE 10)

Immerse Bible, page 465-466

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

**A SUPER-ANGEL, AN OMINOUS ANNOUNCEMENT,
AND ACID-REFLUX**

REVELATION 10

- ▶ Throughout human history, God has worked according to dispensations: time periods where He administers His relationship with humanity according to His purposes and revelation to them. We are living in the era called “Today” or the dispensation of grace. At an appointed time, the “Day of the Lord” will begin, as God judges spiritual rebellion and the story of human history ends.
- ▶ In Revelation 10, we see three significant details as humanity is propelled toward the end—
 - (1) A mighty angel with a dominating stance,
 - (2) A superseding oath with an ominous announcement,
 - (3) A small book with a conflicting effect.

A MIGHTY ANGEL

Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, surrounded by a cloud, with a rainbow over his head. His face shone like the sun, and his feet were like pillars of fire.

- ▶ We previously saw a “mighty angel” loudly asking, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?” (5.2) Now we see “another mighty angel coming down from heaven” to earth, whose appearance is significant because of his heaven-like qualities:
 - ▶ Surrounded by a cloud (an allusion to majesty and deity)
 - ▶ A rainbow over his head (previously seen in chapter 4)
 - ▶ A face with sun-like brilliance (a description of Christ in chapter 1)
 - ▶ Feet like pillars of fire (also corresponds to chapter 1)

A DOMINATING STANCE

And in his hand was a small scroll that had been opened. He stood with his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land. And he gave a great shout like the roar of a lion. And when he shouted, the seven thunders answered.

- ▶ In his colossal size, the angel straddles land and ocean, superseding natural proportions and physics – he can stand on the water! This is a posture of domination, of taking possession and establishing ownership. The earth has long been under the dominion of evil, but in reality, it belongs to the Lord and it is being reclaimed.

*The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it; the world, and all who live in it;
for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters. (PSALM 24.1)*

- ▶ Another divine-like quality is seen when the mighty angel “gave a great shout like the roar of a lion.” The Lamb has previously been described as the “Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (5.5). The prophet Jeremiah was instructed to make this prophecy against the nations:

‘Like a lion about to attack,

the Lord will roar from the heights of heaven;

from his holy dwelling on high he will roar loudly.

He will roar mightily against his land.

He will shout in triumph, like those stomping juice from the grapes,

against all those who live on the earth. (JEREMIAH 25.30 NET)

- ▶ In response, the seven thunders answered. Thunder symbolizes God’s voice (cf. Psalm 29) and is associated with God’s throne (4.5).

- ▶ So, is this angel actually the Lord Jesus Christ? In the Old Testament, we frequently read of the “angel of the LORD” where the occasion was more than an angel with a special authority and commission, but was a revealing of divine nature and covenant purposes as only God possesses. (In the NT, “angel of the Lord” always refers to an angel with a special assignment.) In Revelation, “angel” always refers to a created being. Commentators are divided over whether this is the Lord Jesus Christ or an archangel invested with exceptional qualities to represent the transcendent majesty, glory, and authority of God. ***Whether revealed through the Lord Jesus, angels, or the Scriptures, we must never treat anything about God trivially.***

A SUPERSEDING OATH

Then the angel I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand toward heaven. He swore an oath in the name of the One who lives forever and ever, who created the heavens and everything in them, the earth and everything in it, and the sea and everything in it.

- ▶ If this is an angel, extraordinary authority has been delegated to him, for he is qualified to do something that is forbidden to humans: he swears an oath in the name of the One who lives forever and ever—something that Jesus commands us *not* to do.

But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool . . . All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one. (MATTHEW 5.34-35, 37)

- ▶ Such an oath has one distinct purpose – to make clear that God’s purposes are unchangeable:

People swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. (HEBREWS 6.16-18)

- ▶ The seriousness of this spoken oath is revealed in the ominous and irrevocable announcement made by the mighty angel:

“There will be no more delay. When the seventh angel blows his trumpet, God’s mysterious plan will be fulfilled. It will happen just as he announced it to his servants the prophets.”

AN OMINOUS ANNOUNCEMENT

He said, “There will be no more delay. When the seventh angel blows his trumpet, God’s mysterious plan will be fulfilled. It will happen just as he announced it to his servants the prophets.”

- ▶ There is a critical lesson for us to learn in the announcement, “There will be no more delay.” When time passes and it seems that an expected ominous event is not going to happen, we view the warning less seriously. So will it be regarding Christ’s coming and God’s appointed judgments (cf. 2 Peter 3.2-10). Jesus warned against us becoming spiritually irresponsible or living as those in Noah’s time, without regard for preaching or prophecy (Matthew 24.36-51).

GOD'S MYSTERIOUS PLAN

- ▶ The word "mystery" appears three places in the Bible:
 - (1) In the Book of Daniel, in connection with the dreams of King Nebuchadnezzar and their interpretations;
 - (2) In the letters of Romans, Ephesians, and Colossians where the apostle's primary emphasis is the "long hidden mystery" now revealed, "namely, Christ" and the salvation of the Gentiles;
 - (3) In Revelation where it refers to spiritual mysteries: the seven stars and the seven lamp stands (1.20), the mystery of God (10.7), the mystery of the woman and the beast she rides (17.5, 7).

- ▶ The announcement about God's mysterious plan includes the emphasis that it will happen just as God had announced it to His servants, the prophets. The Old Testament contains hundreds of eschatological references to the coming judgments and the end of human history on the Day of the Lord. It anticipates the full redemption and reclamation of all that, through sin, fell under the dominion of darkness.
- ▶ This is the "Today" era, a time set by God for us to respond and obey (Hebrews 4.7, 11; cf. 2 Peter 3.9). Only He knows the day and hour of Christ's return and the "Day of the Lord" which will come "like a thief in the night" but He *has* revealed all we need to know to be ready.

A SMALL BOOK

Then the voice from heaven spoke to me again: “Go and take the open scroll from the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land.”

- ▶ The mighty angel came down from heaven with an open scroll in his hand; now that apostle is instructed to take the scroll from the angel. There are three things for us to understand: ⁽¹⁾ the scroll was an integral part of the angel's authority to declare God's dominion and purposes; ⁽²⁾ therefore, it is the word of God, ⁽³⁾ the message that is to be proclaimed to all the world (v. 11).

A CONFLICTING EFFECT

So I went to the angel and told him to give me the small scroll. “Yes, take it and eat it,” he said. “It will be sweet as honey in your mouth, but it will turn sour in your stomach!” So I took the small scroll from the hand of the angel, and I ate it! It was sweet in my mouth, but when I swallowed it, it turned sour in my stomach.

- ▶ In a corresponding experience, Ezekiel was given a scroll by God on which was written lament and woe, and when told to eat it, he found it as sweet as honey (Ezekiel 3.1-2). He, too, was then told to go and speak, whether or not people responded. God also warned Isaiah that the people would prefer the words of a different scroll than those God had spoken (Isaiah 30.8-11).

- ▶ God's Word contains assurances but also rebuke; it is truth that brings freedom, but it is also the standard that condemns. It pronounces guilt and induces shame, but acquits and justifies those who repent. It is life to those who eat it, but death for those who neglect it. It costs us everything in this life, but promises us a hundred times as much in eternity.
- ▶ Likewise, the message of Jesus and the cross is foolishness to some, offensive to others, but the power and wisdom of God for those who receive it (1 Corinthians 1.23-24). Those who truly live for Christ and testify about him are to some "the fragrance of life" and to others "the stench of death" (2 Corinthians 2.16).

FINAL THOUGHTS

- ▶ Are you spiritually irresponsible and reckless, or are you living with spiritual attentiveness to the timetable and purposes of God?
- ▶ What is God's book to you? This past week, did you consume Christ, the bread of life? Are other things more appealing to you than God's Word? Do you have "ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church" today, or is all of this rather uninteresting and quickly forgotten?
- ▶ At the end of your life, only one thing will matter: how did you respond and live according to the grace and truth that God has given you through Christ, His final Word?