

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
6-27-18

Revelation 10

The Angel & Scroll - Verses 1-6

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. 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." 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!"

In Revelation chapter nine John completes his narration of the sixth blast of the trumpets and the first two woes. The reader is left expecting an account of the third woe and seventh blast of the trumpet. Rather than proceeding as expected John digresses from his expected path. (He uses a similar literary device before the opening of the seventh seal where he poses and answers the question of who can abide the day of the Lord.)

Instead of speaking of the third woe, a new vision opens and John sees another angel descending from heaven holding a little book. John is forbidden to record much of what the angel imparts.

The angel stands in contrast to Satan. Satan is associated with smoke and darkness coming from the pit while the angel is associated with light and glory coming from the heaven. The rainbow is the symbol that God will preserve man and the earth. Pillars of fire guided the Israelites at night during the exodus.

The visit of the angel foreshadows the millennial peace that Christ will bring. The book that John eats is his mission as an Elias (messenger) to gather the Ten Tribes for the Second Coming.

The book is sweet in his mouth because he is preaching the word of God while it is bitter in his belly because of the suffering that the people of Christ have to endure. (The eating of the book is borrowed from Ezekiel 3:1-3. Eating the book is symbolic of internalizing the message he received and preparing for the mission he receives in the part of the message (the seven thunders) that he is prohibited from recording. This digression in Revelation chapter 10 explains why John received the vision we know as the Book of Revelation.

10:1 The purpose of this mighty angel is clear—to announce the final judgments on the earth. His right foot on the sea and left foot on the land (10:2) indicate that his words deal with all creation, not just a limited part as did the seal and trumpet judgments. The seventh trumpet (11:15) will usher in the seven bowl judgments, which will bring an end to the present world. When this universal judgment comes, God's truth will prevail.

10:2 We see two scrolls in Revelation. The first contains a revelation of judgments against evil (5:1-14). The contents of the second little scroll are not indicated, but it also may contain a revelation of judgment.

10:2 This powerful angel conveyed his high rank and his authority from God by straddling the land and the sea. His huge size contrasts with the smallness of God's enemies. When things are going badly in your life, remember that this angel represents the kind of power that is on your side. God's angelic forces are with you (Matthew 18:10; Hebrews 1:14). Keep your problems in their proper perspective by remembering that God's power is available to you to deal with your problems.

10:4 Throughout history people have wanted to know what would happen in the future, and God reveals some of it in this book. But John was stopped from revealing certain parts of his vision. An angel also told the prophet Daniel that some visions he saw were not to be revealed yet to everyone (Daniel 12:9), and Jesus told his disciples that the time of the end is known by no one but God (Mark 13:32-33). God has revealed all we need to know to live for him now. In our desire to be ready for the end, we must not place more emphasis on speculation about the last days than on living for God while we wait.

The Angel & Scroll - Verses 7-12

⁷ 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.” 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."

10:7 By saying that "the mystery of God will be accomplished," John was pointing to God's removal of all evil and the final exaltation of Christ as Lord. This pronouncement would bring fear to God's enemies. For God's chosen ones, however, it would bring hope and peace. Do you really long for Christ's return? Do you long for God and his people to be vindicated? Believers ought to pray for God's justice to be carried out and his plan fulfilled. We should want Christ to come because of the triumph of his kingdom—not because things are bad or because we want out of our struggles. Pray expectantly for the fulfillment of God's plan.

10:9-10 The prophet Ezekiel also had a vision in which he was told to eat a scroll filled with judgments against the nation of Israel (Ezekiel 3:1-27). The taste was sweet in his mouth, but the scroll's contents brought destruction—just like the scroll John was told to eat. God's Word is sweet to us as believers because it brings encouragement, but it sours our stomach because of the coming judgment we must pronounce on unbelievers.