

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 5TH-6TH, 2024 // REVELATION

THE MIGHTY ANGEL AND THE SEVEN THUNDERS (REVELATION 10:1-4)

SEAL 7 (REV. 8-16):

- The events of the "Great Tribulation" containing 7 trumpet and 7 bowl judgments.
- Trumpet 1- Hail, fire, and blood
- Trumpet 2- A great mountain (asteroid) into the sea
- Trumpet 3- A great star (asteroid) into rivers
- Trumpet 4- The sky darkens
- Trumpet 5- Plague of locusts
- Trumpet 6- 200 Million Army kills 1/3 of humanity
- Before the 7th trumpet sounds, there's an interlude from 10:1-11:14.
- During this interlude, we see the seriousness of God's coming judgment on the Earth, and we're invited to reflect on its weight and meaning.

John's words, "I saw," mark the beginning of a fresh new vision.

- Following the vision of the six trumpets, John saw a vision of a powerful angel coming down from heaven and standing on earth.
- So far, John has reported all of the second vision (Chs. 4-9) from a heavenly vantage point, but now he moves to Earth and gets personally involved.

This mighty angel John sees is dressed in spectacular attire; clothed with a cloud and with a rainbow on his head.

- Clouds symbolize power and judgment, and the rainbow represents God's covenant of mercy during judgment.
- He had a face like the sun and legs like fiery pillars—imagery that alludes to the pillar of fire that accompanied Israel out of Egypt.

His right foot was on the sea and his left was on the land, suggesting that this was an angel of enormous size.

- The angel held "a little [*biblaridion* {booklet}] opened in his hand" (v. 2).
- The book most likely contained all the terrors of divine judgment yet to come on the Earth.
- This angel is clearly an incredible being, but who is he?

Some scholars have seen the similarities between this angel and Jesus' description in Rev. 1 and concluded this is Christ.

- However, John doesn't worship this angel, the oath-taking is uncharacteristic of Christ, and John clearly identifies this as an angel.
- Due to the similarities of this passage to Dan. 12:7, this is probably the angel Gabriel, who "stands in the presence of God" (Luke 1:19).

The mighty angel called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring, and as he did, "the seven thunders raised their voices."

- "Seven" speaks of completeness and perfection, and "thunder" is often a mark of judgment in Scripture.
- The "seven thunders" may represent the voice of God decreeing divine judgment on the Earth.

But before John could record the message of the 7 peals of thunder, he heard a voice from heaven commanding him not to write it down.

- The reason he was forbidden to record the message isn't revealed.
- It may be that this judgment was too terrifying to record, but we don't know.
- If God wanted this to be known, He wouldn't have forbidden John to write it.

SUFFICIENT, YET NOT EXHAUSTIVE.

Revelation doesn't give us all the details about the end of the world.

- But it does give us ample teaching about how we are to prepare and what kind of lives we are to live.
- The things that are necessary to know and please God are made main and plain in Scripture.
- 2 Peter 3:10-11 (NIV)

NO MORE DELAY (REVELATION 10:5-7)

What seemed to impress John most about this mighty angel was his size and that he was standing on both land and sea (vs. 2, 5, 8).

- John then sees the angel lifting his right hand to heaven to take a solemn vow.
- This vow is an indication that what the angel was about to say was very important and completely true.

The angel took a vow in the name of God using a title that stresses His eternity and sovereign power in and over all creation (v. 6).

- The angel vowed there would be no more delay in the fulfillment of the "mystery of God."
- The martyrs in 6:10 and the prayers of the saints in 8:3-5 had asked, "How long?" Now, this angel provides the answer.

The judgment of the 7th trumpet is about to come, but it's not a single event, it's a period of time (the days of the trumpet call) indicated by 7 bowls of God's judgment.

- The time of God's patience and tolerance of evil has ended, and the final acts of judgment are at hand.
- The "mystery of God" is about to be fulfilled.

Mystery in Scripture refers to truths God has hidden and will reveal in His time.

- There are many mysteries of God mentioned in the NT (mysteries of the kingdom, Matt. 13:11; mystery of the incarnation, 1 Tim. 3:16; mystery of resurrection, 1 Cor. 15:51).

- This mystery the angel spoke of is that of the consummation of God's plan in bringing His Kingdom in Christ to fulfillment.

The fulfillment of Christ establishing His Kingdom involves the final salvation and reign of His Church, and it also involves judgment on humanity, Satan, and demons.

- It's called a "mystery" because, until this point, the details had been unknown.
- This plan is laid out for us from this point to the end of Revelation when the new heavens and new earth are created.

To the Believers living at that time in a world overrun by demons, sin, and natural disasters, this realization that God's plan is on schedule will bring great comfort and hope in the midst of judgment.

- God's timing is different from our timing, but His timing is perfect.
- Sometimes what seems to be a delay in schedule is actually divine providence.

THE LITTLE SCROLL (REVELATION 10:8-11)

The voice that John had earlier heard from heaven that forbid him from recording the words of the 7 thunders now speaks to him.

- The voice told him, "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel."
- Now an active participant in this drama, John obeys and is then commanded to do something very strange.
- He's told to eat the scroll.

John is told that when he eats it, it will be as sweet as honey in his mouth, but it will make his stomach bitter (v. 9).

- Obediently, John does what he's commanded, and it's just as he was warned.
- John is then told he has to prophesy again. What he's about to learn is more devastating, intense, and glorious than anything he's seen up to this point.
- Ezekiel 3:1-3 (ESV)

When God commands John and Ezekiel to "eat" the prophetic word, it's an act designed to symbolize the necessity of reflecting on and understanding the message.

- Even today we might say we are "digesting" someone's words.
- This is a graphic illustration of what a proper response of Believers should be to God's impending judgment.

When John took in the divine words concerning the remaining judgments as the Lord took possession of the universe, he found them "sweet as honey."

- "Sweet" because he wanted Jesus to act in judgment to take back the Earth that is rightfully His and to be exalted and glorified.
- "Sweet" because the promise of an eternity in perfection with Christ is the best news ever.

But John also found this plan to be "bitter."

- "Bitter" because the realization of the terrible doom awaiting those who refuse to repent turned his stomach sour.
- "Bitter" because there was most likely mourning over the judgment of the ungodly and the destruction that will take place.
- "Bitter" because of the reality that John had a serious responsibility to speak God's Word.

After this brief interlude, John must prophesy again about what lies ahead for many "peoples, nations, languages, and kings" (v. 11).

- When God reveals His Word to us, we're never intended to keep it for ourselves.
- John is commanded to record what God has revealed and send it to the seven churches, and you're commanded to know what God has spoken through His Word and to live it and speak it.

SWEET, GLORIOUS, AND BEAUTIFUL.

- God's Kingdom coming means an end to pain, sorrow, sin, and brokenness.
- The gospel of Jesus Christ is good news—broken sinners can be saved and transformed because of what God has done for us in Christ.
- It means we're accepted and forgiven by God.
- It means we can have eternal life in God's Kingdom.

BITTER, PAINFUL, AND SORROWFUL.

- God's Kingdom coming means an end to pain, sorrow, sin, and brokenness.
- Sin is an awful, devastating, and horrible destructive force that causes pain.
- To those who refuse to repent of sin and turn to Christ, the coming of the Kingdom is a bitter, painful, and sorrowful proclamation of terrifying judgment from God.

"YOU MUST PROPHECY AGAIN..."

- We must boldly speak the message of God in its entirety without adding to or taking away from it.
- We must speak the Good News—broken and lost sinners can be saved and transformed.
- "In love's service only wounded soldiers can serve." If the thought of people rejecting Christ and facing judgment doesn't break your heart and bring bitter pain, God needs to change your heart.
- Have we fully digested the magnitude of eternity?
- Do we understand what it means for our family, friends, and loved ones who have rejected Christ?
- Who are some people in our lives we can pray for right now and ask the Lord for an opportunity to "prophesy again" to them?