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Revelation 10

So last week ended with the sounding of the sixth trumpet and the execution of that judgment when another 1/3 of mankind would be killed and by now over half the earth's population has been killed which in today's numbers would be somewhere around 4 billion people. And so 4 billion bodies have been dealt with somehow up to now and God's not through.

The last trumpet is still yet to blow and the bowl judgments still yet to be released upon the earth and tonight we come to chapter 10.

Revelation 10:1, 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. 2 He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices. 4 Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them."

5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven 6 and 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, 7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, “Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth.”

9 So I went to the angel and said to him, “Give me the little book.”

And he said to me, “Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.”

10 Then I took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. 11 And he said to me, “You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.”

No doubt, everyone of us at some point in time if we’ve lived long enough, have asked the question, why does God allow evil people to continue to exist? When will He will deal with them once and for all and get that revenge on them that He says is reserved only for Him?

Well, the answer is here in this chapter in verse 7.

7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

This is the “mystery of God” that this verse refers to. The mystery of when God will execute judgment on those who are evil and do evil to others.

The mystery of God which will be revealed in the future at the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

So what is the sounding of the seventh trumpet and when does it occur?

Well, look at chapter 11 and verse 15, and I'll give you a sneak peak.

Revelation 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

So when the seventh angel sounds, the mystery of God is finished, the silence of God through all history is finished, and the kingdom of the world, becomes the kingdom of Jesus Christ, who will reign for eternity.

So what happens at the seventh trumpet? The kingdom of Christ comes. The seventh angel will blow that trumpet and there will be no more delay. That's how verse 6 ends, the end of the verse: no more delay. "The mystery of God is finished." And that's coming in chapter 11, verse 15.

You say, "Well, why doesn't it come sooner? Why doesn't it come immediately after the sixth trumpet, which was way back in chapter 9?"

And the answer is because in the seven seals, and then in the seven trumpets, and in the seven bowls to come, there is always an interlude between the six judgment and the seventh.

There was an interlude between the sixth and the seventh seal, and that was chapter 7; and it talked about the salvation of people from every tongue and tribe and nation. And there is an interlude between the sixth and seventh bowl, which will come in chapter 16. And there is an interlude here between the sixth and seventh trumpets which runs from chapter 10, verse 1 to chapter 11, verse 14. And so it's the longest interlude of them all.

So what's the point of these interludes?

Well, as these judgments escalate and reach their highest and most devastating level, which is when they go into the seventh phase of each judgment, there's a pause to encourage the saints.

And so that's what these interludes are for; they're to give us encouragement and comfort and assurance that God still remembers His people, and that He still remembers His promise and He will fulfill His Word.

And so here in chapter 10 we're in the interlude or the time of encouragement for the saints in between the sixth and seventh trumpet judgments.

So look at verse 1.

1, 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.

John sees this mighty angel or strong angel and he's coming in a cloud like the Bible tells us Jesus will come. And of course we know when Jesus comes back again, He's coming in judgement. It also says he has feet like pillars of fire, which are also symbolic of judgement. And so this is not a messenger angel, this is an angel of judgment or at the very least an angel who has come to announce judgement.

But now, he also has a rainbow on his head. And a rainbow of course was symbolic of God's promise not to destroy the earth again with a flood and so it's a covenant symbol or a symbol of the mercy of God.

And then his face was like the sun, which was indication that he had just come from the very presence of God.

And so this is an angel who represents the judgment of God, and the mercy of God, as well as the presence of God.

And then just as important is what he held in his hand. Look at verse 2.

2 He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices.

So what is this little book?

Well, it's mentioned again down in verses 8 & 9.

8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth."

9 So I went to the angel and said to him, "Give me the little book."

So what is it?

Well, remember back in chapter 5, there was a book or a scroll in the hand of God, which is title deed to the earth. It was the seven-sealed scroll that contained all the judgments—the seal judgments, trumpet judgments, bowl judgments—and only Christ was worthy to open it and therefore take back His rightful possession of the universe, as all these judgments would unfold.

And so this book is that book. It's the title deed to the universe, and it belongs to the heir who is Christ. And here it's open and it's in the hand of this angel who executes judgment and he's able to hold it now because all the seals have already been broken by Christ. We're already in the seventh seal and so everything is open. No seals remain to be broken. All the final

judgments have been set into action to bring about the return of Christ to once and for all establish His kingdom here on this earth.

And this angel is so mighty and so powerful, that this the book in John's vision appears to be small. It appears to be "a little book," if you will, but it's the very same book, God gave Jesus. It's the title deed to the earth.

And then it says,

And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars.

In other words, he's staking claim to all the earth; to the land and to the sea. And he's making that known to all the world with a shout. And then in the first part of verse 4 he says,

4 Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices,

In other words, when this angel cried out, it was like seven claps of loud thunder. It was like the voice of God coming from the throne through this angel; sort of like a seven-gun salute from heaven.

4 Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them."

Now, every time before, he was told to write down what he saw and heard, but here, he's told not to write it!

You say, well, what was it he didn't write?

I don't know, he didn't write it!

And we can speculate from now until eternity what it was, but we just don't know.

And then in verse 5.

5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven 6 and 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,

An uplifted right hand to heaven, we know, is the sign of a pledge or an oath or a promise to God about something.

And what is he swearing to?

Look at the end of verse 6: He says that there should be no more delay. The last seal is open and the final judgment has arrived to bring an end to the Day of the Lord.

The prayers of the saints, “How long? How long?” are about to be answered. All the times that people have prayed, “Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” that answer to your prayer has arrived. This is the end. This is the end of the mystery of God.

And when will it come?

7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

When the seventh trumpet sounds; and we read it earlier over in chapter 11: when the seventh angel sounds,

In verse 15 And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” 16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who

was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.

And so the mystery is finished. It's over and Christ has come; He's on the throne and He's ruling over the nations. But of course that's yet to come. And then in verse 8

8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth."

And this again was the seven-sealed scroll that contained all the judgments— which God gave to Jesus because He alone was worthy to open it and at this point all seven of the seals have been broken. And much of the book has already come to pass. And so the book's not as big if you will as it was before and so says;

9 So I went to the angel and said to him, "Give me the little book." And he said to me, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth."

Now, this is a little strange. John is having a vision, and he's describing it to us. But now he's being asked to actually take part in this vision and to take hold of this book, which is open in the hand of this angel who stands on the sea and on the land.

And so he takes the little book out of the angel's hand and he eats it.

Verse 10;

10 Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter.

It starts out sweet as honey, but finishes up making his stomach not feel so good.

Now, again this is strange, especially if you don't know a little bit of Old Testament history, so let me give you some.

Turn back to Ezekiel 2.

Ezekiel 2:1, And He said to me, “Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you.” 2 Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. 3 And He said to me: “Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. 4 For they are impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’ 5 As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for they are a rebellious house—yet they will know that a prophet has been among them.

6 “And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them nor be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns are with you and you dwell among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, though they are a rebellious house. 7 You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious. 8 But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you.”

9 Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. 10 Then He spread it before me; and there was writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it were lamentations and mourning and woe.

3 Moreover He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.” 2 So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll.

3 And He said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you.” So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness.

So the Word of God in the mouth of Ezekiel here in this image at least up until this point and time, was sweet as honey. And God’s Word is sweet as honey when it’s followed; when it’s trusted and obeyed.

Jeremiah said the same thing, He said, **“Your words were found, and I did eat them, and Your word was the joy and rejoicing of my heart.”**

Psalms 119 says, “How sweet are Your words to my taste, even sweeter than honey to my mouth.”

Eating the Word of God is a sweet experience for the child of God, but it’s not all sweet.

That last part of verse 10 says that it made his stomach bitter. Why was that?

Well, it’s sweet to know that the mystery of God will one day be finished and Christ will reign supremely. And it’s sweet to know that we one day as His children will reign with Him. And it’s sweet to know that one day Satan will be bound forever and never again allowed to deceive another soul and that all God’s promises will one day be fulfilled. All that is sweet.

But not all God’s word is sweet, because God’s word also includes a word for those who reject the love and mercy and grace of God through Jesus Christ. And that word is not sweet. That word is very bitter in fact, especially to the unrighteous.

Back in Ezekiel chapter 2 and verse 10 Ezekiel says this.

10 Moreover He said to me: “Son of man, receive into your heart all My words that I speak to you, and hear with your ears. 11 And go, get to the captives, to the children of your people, and speak to them and tell them, ‘Thus says the Lord God,’ whether they hear, or whether they refuse.”

The sad truth is there will be many who will refuse to believe no matter what. No matter how many times they’re given the opportunity to repent and to be saved, they won’t receive the free gift of salvation.

After Ezekiel finished preaching in verse 12 it says

12 Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a great thunderous voice: “Blessed is the glory of the Lord from His place!” 13 I also heard the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels beside them, and a great thunderous noise. 14 So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.

It’s sad to watch, especially if it’s a loved one. It’s sad to watch as they continue down that path in life that leads away from the Lord instead of toward Him. But everyone of us is touched by it. None of us can get away from the bitterness when we have unconverted people in our family or in our circle of friends.

But we can rejoice in the sweetness of what God has planned for us, while at the same time we continue to pray for them. But it’s a balancing act isn’t it? It’s like a roller coaster of valleys and mountains, of low places and high places. Sweetness and bitterness, they’re both part of life.

And all we can do is keep praying and preaching. That's what the angel tells John in verse 11.

11 And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

Just keep on preaching. That's all we can do. Just keep giving out the gospel at every opportunity.

Let's pray