

Living Word Fellowship Church

An Expository Explanation of Revelation Chapter 10

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Part I

A. General Description:

As there was an episode between the sixth and seventh seals, so there is one (ch. 10:1–11) after the sixth, introductory to the seventh trumpet (ch. 11:15, the grand consummation). The Church and her fortunes are the subject: as the judgments on the unbelieving *inhabiters of the earth* (ch. 8:13) were the subject of the fifth and sixth woe-trumpets. ch. 6:11 is referred to, v. 6: the martyrs crying to be avenged told they must ‘rest yet for a little *time*.’ In v. 6, they are assured ‘there should be no longer (any interval of) time;’ but (v. 7) at the trumpet sounding of the seventh angel, the mystery of God (His mighty plan heretofore hidden, but then to be revealed) shall be finished. The *little open book* (Rev 10:2, 9, 10) is given to John by the angel, with a charge (Rev 10:11) that he *must prophesy again concerning* (so the Greek) *peoples, nations, tongues, and kings:* which prophecy (as appears from Rev 11:15–19) affects those *peoples, nations, tongues, and kings* only in relation to Israel and the Church, who form the main object of the prophecy.^[1]

While Revelation is primarily designed to reveal and not to conceal God’s purpose and future events, some revelation was kept hidden, as illustrated by God’s prohibiting John from writing what “the voices” of the seven thunders said.^[2]

Eating the little scroll (10:9) was an allusion to Ezekiel 2:8–3:3. The New Testament speaks of other mysteries of God (10:7; Rom. 11:25; 1 Cor. 15:51; Col. 2:2; 2 Thess. 2:7). Here, the mystery has to do with all that is unknown concerning God’s prophecies of how he will triumph over evil and usher in his kingdom. The mystery

of God refers to the program of God declared by the prophets that bring about the consummation of human history, specifically, the kingdom (cf. 11:15). Again, this is a message of exhortation to the present churches and an encouragement to those going through the tribulation.^[3]

B. Background Information:

1. The cloud was the garment or robe the angel was wearing. So in some languages, this may be rendered as “the angel wore a cloud-like clothes,” “the angel’s clothes were a cloud,” “the angel had a cloud around him as if he were wearing clothes,” or “the angel was clothed with a cloud.”^[4]
2. The Antichrist will soon complete his conquest and force the whole world to submit to his control. But before that happens, the Savior will claim the world for Himself, the inheritance that His Father promised Him (Ps. 2:6–9). Satan roars like a lion to frighten his prey (1 Peter 5:8), but the Lion of Judah roars to announce victory (see Ps. 95:3–5; Isa. 40:12–17).^[5]
3. Raising one’s hand toward a god was used in solemn oath formulas in Greek culture as well as in the Old Testament and later Jewish literature.^[6]
4. *Swore by him who:* The name of God is used in order to show that what the angel is about to say is absolutely true.^[7]
5. The angel’s enormity and his feet on both land and sea indicate how great his dominion is.^[8]
 - a) The angel’s enormity and his feet on both land and sea indicate how great his dominion is.^[9]

- b) The angel's posture is that of a conqueror taking possession of his territory. He is claiming the whole world (see Josh. 1:1–3). Of course, only the victorious Saviour could make such a claim.
- c) The seventh trumpet and final two woes are delayed while John sees another vision of a mighty angel. His appearance with a cloud and a rainbow indicate that he is a special messenger from the heavenly throne (cf. 4:3). Like the son of man (1:16), this angel also has a face beaming like the sun. ^[10]
- d) Raising one's hand toward a god was used in solemn oath formulas in Greek culture as well as in the Old Testament and later Jewish literature. ^[11]
- e) The name of God is used in order to show that what the angel is about to say is absolutely true. See *A Handbook on the Gospel of Matthew*, page 148, for a detailed discussion on the difference in English between “promise,” “vow,” “swear,” or “oath.” In this context, the angel is taking an oath, making a solemn statement, with God as a witness, that something is true. ^[12]
- f) The seventh trumpet and final two woes are delayed while John sees another vision of a mighty angel. His appearance with a cloud and a rainbow indicates that he is a special messenger from the heavenly throne (cf. 4:3). Like the son of man (1:16), this angel also has a face beaming like the sun. The remarkable appearance of this angel suggests a comparison with the Colossus of Rhodes, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.
- g) The land and the sea are the primary foci of the first two trumpet judgments (8:7–9). The stance of this mighty angel suggests that he represents the Creator of the earth and the sea and that further judgment still awaits them both. His shout, like a lion's roar, suggests a possible link with the lion of Judah (5:5), but the simile is for comparison of sound, not for identification purposes. ^[13]

6. The emphasis in Revelation 10:6 is on God the Creator. Various judgments have already been felt by the heavens, the earth, and the sea, and more judgments are to come. The word that is translated as “time” actually means “delay.” God has been delaying His judgments so that lost sinners will have time to repent (2 Peter 3:1–9); now, however, He will accelerate His judgments and accomplish His purposes.^[14]

7. When the first mighty angel appears in 5:2, he asks John who is worthy to open the sealed scroll in God’s right hand. Once the seventh seal is opened (8:1), that scroll is not mentioned again until now.^[15]

8. To this point, John is allowed to record the contents of his visions. However, an unknown voice from heaven now forbids him to write down the mysterious utterance of the seven thunders, who appear only here in Revelation. Perhaps their message concerns the final seven bowls of judgment, whose disclosure is premature at this time. Daniel was told to seal up his visions (Dan. 8:26; 12:4, 9). And Paul, after being taken up into the third heaven, was likewise forbidden to describe his revelation (2 Cor. 12:4). Following the final vision, John is commanded by the angel not to seal up the words of this prophecy (Rev. 22:10).^[16]

9. God’s Word is compared to food: bread (Matt. 4:4), milk (1 Peter 2:2), meat (1 Cor. 3:1–2), and honey (Ps. 119:103). The Prophets Jeremiah (Jer. 15:16) and Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:9–3:4) knew what it was to “eat” the Word before they could share it with others. The Word must always “become flesh” (John 1:14) before it can be given to those who need it. Woe unto that preacher or teacher who merely echoes God’s Word and does not incarnate it, making it a living part of his very being.^[17]

^[14] Brown, D., Fausset, A. R., & Jamieson, R. (n.d.). [*A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Acts–Revelation: Vol. VI*](#) (p. 686). William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited.

- ^[2] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 954). Victor Books.
- ^[3] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). [Tyndale concise Bible commentary](#) (p. 743). Tyndale House Publishers.
- ^[4] Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993). [A handbook on the Revelation to John](#) (p. 156). United Bible Societies.
- ^[5] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 2, p. 597). Victor Books.
- ^[6] Keener, C. S. (1993). [The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament](#) (Re 10:1–6). InterVarsity Press.
- ^[7] Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993). [A handbook on the Revelation to John](#) (p. 159). United Bible Societies.
- ^[8] Keener, C. S. (1993). [The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament](#) (Re 10:1–6). InterVarsity Press.
- ^[9] Keener, C. S. (1993). [The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament](#) (Re 10:1–6). InterVarsity Press.
- ^[10] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Hebrews to Revelation](#). (Vol. 4, p. 308). Zondervan.
- ^[11] Keener, C. S. (1993). [The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament](#) (Re 10:1–6). InterVarsity Press.
- ^[12] Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993). [A handbook on the Revelation to John](#) (p. 159). United Bible Societies.
- ^[13] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Hebrews to Revelation](#). (Vol. 4, p. 309). Zondervan.
- ^[14] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 2, p. 597). Victor Books.
- ^[15] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Hebrews to Revelation](#). (Vol. 4, pp. 308–309). Zondervan.
- ^[16] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Hebrews to Revelation](#). (Vol. 4, p. 309). Zondervan.
- ^[17] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 2, p. 598). Victor Books.