

The Ongoing Mystery

Revelation 10:1-11

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Rev 10:1-11 NKJV] 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

1:09



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."

INTRO

Revelation 10-11:14 is another interlude within the timeline of Revelation. The 6th. trumpet has blown ushering in a devastating force upon humanity, at the hand of which 1/3 or the population is wiped out.

- The 7th trumpet will unleash rapid cascading set of events that ends in the fulfillment of all prophecy and the earth coming under full authority of Jesus as he takes His rightful place as king.
- But within these last 3 1/2 years of history, a lot happens!
- Chapter 10 sets the tone for the remaining judgments that must take place.

1. the Messengers

2. The Mysteries

3. The Message

4. The Mission

1 The Messengers (1-3)

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Rev 10:1-11 NKJV] 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.

APPLICATION

A terrifying and awe-inspiring sight. The vision of the angel brings forth an intimidating picture for any human being to try and comprehend.

Some suggest that this is an expression of Christ for the following reasons:

- His description seems similar to that of Jesus in Chapter 1 (his appearance was like the sun shining in its strength).
- He appears to have a rainbow around his head, like the rainbow around God's throne.
- He is clothed with the clouds and has feet like pillars of fire, representing the authority to implement divine judgment.
- By his placement, he appears to have authority over the entire earth and sea (The earth is the Lord's and fullness thereof).
- His voice is likened to the roar of a lion. Jesus is the lion of the tribe of Judah who roars with God's righteous judgment.
- He swears by the creator. The bible tells us in Hebrews that God, having no one higher to swear by, swore by himself when he made his covenant with Abraham.
- In the OT, Jesus often appeared as the Angel of the Lord for a certain purpose of communicating a certain judgment.

It is certainly not outside the realm of possibility that this is Jesus is a form of one who now has the authority to unleash the final half of the judgments of God upon the earth, having already opened the scroll.

However, I do not think this is Jesus for the following reasons:

- Angels are awesome beings, more frightful, mighty, and beautiful than we could imagine. It shouldn't be a mystery that angels look heavenly and share similar appearance qualities. Ezekiel 28 describes Lucifer as "perfect in wisdom and beauty," even Paul says he can appear as an "angel of light."
- The rainbow and the feet of fire as well as his feet standing on the earth and sea, represent authority given by God to declare the coming judgments upon the earth. The rainbow represents God mercy in the midst of judgment. Clouds also represent judgment that is heavenly in nature.
- Nowhere in the NT is Jesus ever referred to as an angel or a messenger. Even in Revelation, every time we see Jesus, he has a unique title (son of man, first and last, alpha and omega, beginning and end, etc.)
- At the seventh trumpet, Jesus ultimately returns to execute final judgment on the earth, whereas this angel seems to be an angel of the announcement, proclaiming the contents of the final judgment.

- This could be Michael archangel (**NAME: Who is like God**), but I think it's more reasonable to think that this is yet another angelic being in the series of many angelic beings that John observes in this vision.

THE THUNDERS

Seven - represents the number of divine completion and perfection (seven spirits of God). It's not unreasonable for us to consider that this is the perfect voice of God declaring something.

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Job 37:2-5 NKJV] 2 Hear attentively the thunder of His voice, And the rumbling that comes from His mouth. 3 He sends it forth under the whole heaven, His lightning to the ends of the earth. 4 After it a voice roars; He thunders with His majestic voice, and He does not restrain them when His voice is heard. 5 God thunders marvelously with His voice; He does great things which we cannot comprehend.

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Psa 104:7 NKJV] 7 At Your rebuke they fled; At the voice of Your thunder they hastened away.

At the very least, we find that thunder is likened to a messenger of God's impending judgment upon his adversaries.

2 The Mysteries (4-7)

BIBLE PASSAGE

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."

APPLICATION

You've got to be kidding me! This is the most intense cliffhanger in all of the universe. Honestly, this side of heaven there are very few things my human mind wants to know more than what the thunders said!

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Deu 29:29 NKJV] 29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

We can spend our efforts trying to figure out what God has purposefully hidden, or we can focus on taking heed to the things we know!

BIBLE PASSAGE

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.

APPLICATION

When this mighty angel raises his hand to heaven, he is taking the posture of proclamation (here ye, here ye). He is also diverting all attention now to the creator. When we lift our hands in worship and prayer, we are turning our focus upward.

- He then makes a declaration about a certain mystery of God, and the appeal is to the eternal creator of everything (he lives forever and created the earth, sea, and sky). This reminds us of God's sovereignty over everything. Who has the right to touch and shake the heavens and the earth and everything in them? The one who created them, the one who existed before time, space, and matter came to be.
- **The proclamation is that God will no longer delay but that the mystery will be finished once the seventh trumpet blows.**

A mystery in the bible always refers to something obscured in the Old Testament but brought to light in Christ. Mysteries in the NT:

- Mystery of godliness - God was manifested in the flesh
- Mystery of the rapture - we will not all remain but will be caught up together with Christ and be changed.
- Mystery of marriage - marriage represents Christ and the church
- Mystery of the gospel (Rom 16) that was kept hidden from the foundation of the world.
- Mystery of lawlessness regarding the anti-christ (2 Thess. 2:7)

So what mystery will finally be completed once the seventh trumpet blows? What mystery is currently being "delayed" that will be delayed no longer?

BIBLE PASSAGE

1.) The mystery was declared in the OT: **which He revealed to His servants the prophets...**

[Amo 3:7 NKJV] 7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

2.) It's a mystery that is currently being delayed.

EXAMPLE: Weather changing yesterday.

POSSIBILITIES

1. The mystery of Evil ("Why does God allow evil to prosper?")

- Many of us have heard this argument from unbelievers, "Why does a good God allow evil?" While we have good answers for that, sometimes I even have to accept that this is a mystery. It was a mystery to the Old Testament Prophets.
 - **[Jer 12:1-2, 4 NKJV] 1 Righteous [are] You, O LORD, when I plead with You; Yet let me talk with You about Your judgments. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously? 2 You have planted them, yes, they have taken root; They grow, yes, they bear fruit. You are near in their mouth But far from their mind. ... 4 How long will the land mourn, And the herbs of every field wither? The beasts and birds are consumed, For the wickedness of those who dwell there, Because they said, "He will not see our final end."**
 - **[Hab 1:13 NKJV] 13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, and hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?**

2. The mystery of the Messiah's Kingdom:

[Eph 1:9-10 NIV] 9 he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment--to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

- Currently, the kingdom is here, within us, but we don't see all things as they ought to be. All things aren't yet under His feet. All things in heaven and on earth aren't yet united in Christ. But one day, when the seventh trumpet sounds, there will be no delay and the kingdom of God will be under the perfect authority of Jesus here on earth.
- **[Dan 7:27 NKJV] 27 Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'**

3. The Mystery of God's patience

[2Pe 3:2-9 NKJV] 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Rev 6:9-11 NKJV] 9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

3 The Message (8-10)

BIBLE PASSAGE

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.

THE BOOK

The book here seems to reflect God's divine revelation concerning the judgment that are still to come. Just as the scroll earlier unveiled the seals, this little book seems to contain the events that will take place in a small amount of compressed time.

- I do think we should meditate on the fact that the Lord wants John to consume this divine revelation. It was to go into John in order for it to affect John and ultimately (at the end of the chapter) will come out of John to speak to nations.

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Jer 15:16 NKJV] 16 Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.

[1Pe 2:2 NKJV] 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

QUOTE

“The Word of God is not only to be heard but to be taken into our souls. We must steep our spirits in it.”

Charles Spurgeon

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Psa 19:9-10 NKJV] 9 ...The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

THE BITTER-SWEET NATURE OF GOD'S DIVINE PROCLIMATIONS

Sweet - declares the truth of God that sets us free.

Bitter - declares God's righteous judgment upon unbelief.

Sweet - Reveals to us the nature of the God we love, worship, and adore.

Bitter - It goes against human nature and the ability to understand and comprehend.

Sweet - Because we all long for God's perfect justice, wrong things made right, and the world to come under the perfect kingship of Jesus.

Bitter - Because that justice will mean rightful eternal judgment upon all people who reject the knowledge of the truth that they might be saved.

APPLICATION

I fear that one of the many reasons Western Christianity has become so shallow is that we have adopted the philosophy of wanting the sweetness of the word while rejecting and ignoring any bitterness that it produces.

- We've adopted a narcissistic, entitled mentality within the masses toward church, sermons, worship, etc.
- The church experience is about you and catering to the kinds of sermons you want to hear, and the type of music that you like.
- We use God's word like garnish rather than the main course. We sprinkle it, often out of context, around self-help talks and motivational speeches, and wonder why there's

never any transformation of souls, hearts, sinful appetites, and desires.

God's word is sweet to the one who wants more of Christ in their lives, but God's word will also convict us, demand change, root out evil, idolatry, greed, pride, lust, and selfishness. At times it will make us feel more bitter as it transforms us.

QUOTE

“ God will not thrust His Word into our mouths and force us to receive it. He hands it to us and we must take it. Nor can He change the effects the Word will have in our lives: there will be both sorrow and joy, bitterness and sweetness. God’s Word contains sweet promises and assurances, but it also contains bitter warnings and prophecies of judgment. The Christian bears witness of both life and death.

Wiersbe, W. W, The Bible exposition commentary (Vol. 2, p. 598)

BIBLE PASSAGE

[2Co 2:15-16 NKJV] 15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?

4 The Mission (11)

BIBLE PASSAGE

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

APPLICATION

As part of Christ's kingdom, sometimes you volunteer for a job (Here am I, send me), other times the job finds you; you are assigned by your commander and king. John is told "You must..."

- If Jesus is our Lord, we must recognize that there are certain parts of our mission that are "**musts**."
- The gospel must be preached to all the world.
- Spiritual warfare must be engaged.
- Holiness must be pursued.
- People must be loved.
- Yes, God wants us to do it willingly with a joyful heart, but that doesn't mean these things are optional.

[Luk 6:46 NKJV] 46 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?"

QUOTE

“ Until Jesus returns, God's truth must continue to speak through those He has called to represent Him.

Pastor Josh

COMMUNION

Communion Sunday

