

THE REVELATION

JUNE 16, 2024

Chapter 10:1 – 11:3

d) Angel with the Little Book (10:1–7)

(1) His Look (10:1-2)

Rev 10:1 I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire; ² and he had in his hand a little book which was open. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land;

John is about to be let in on a little secret that has been written in the little book that this angel has. John sees the angel, and he sees the book.

(2) His Cry (10:3)

Rev 10:3 and he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars; and when he had cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices.

When John heard the cry of the strong angel's voice, he heard it as a lion's roar, but he also heard "the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices." What are the seven peals of thunder? Notice that the seven peals of thunder were in response to the lion's roar. The next verse will provide a little more insight.

(3) His Command (10:4)

Rev 10:4 When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."

John was not allowed to record the words of the seven peals of thunder. Why? These seven peals must have been in total rebellion to what the voice of the lion had roared. The LORD was writing this book, and Satan must have been trying to get his word in edgewise. But the LORD would not have it. "John, don't record what you have heard the thunder say, it is not to be written down." This book is God's Word, not Satan's. He may have had a part in the story through the Scripture, but this last book of the Bible is being presented by the LORD to declare the pageantry of His Second Coming and the gathering of His Holy nation of Israel to Him as their Messiah. This book is not for Satan to put his two cents into the text. The LORD has let Satan and man have their own way enough in this world. It is time for the LORD to have His. An oath is needed.

(4) His Oath (10:5-6)

Rev 10:5 Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, ⁶ and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE EARTH AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS IN IT, that there will be delay no longer, ⁷ but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets.

The strong angel was loyal to the LORD. He gave his pledge to the LORD. He knew the LORD; he was created by the LORD on the first day and had seen everything the LORD had done down through time. It was time for the march to the Second Coming, which would begin with the blast of the seventh angel with the seventh trumpet.

The strong angel says an interesting thing: "Then the mystery of God is finished." The prophets of old were taught this, but did they really understand it? We surely do not understand it all. Nevertheless, we all will one day when Jesus breaks through the eastern skies to be the King of all.

e) Instructions to John (10:8–11:2)

(1) Eat the Book (10:8-10)

Rev 10:8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, "Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land."⁹ So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. And he said to me, "Take it and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."¹⁰ I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.

What was in the book that John ate? The message was sweet in his mouth but sour in his stomach. What was written in that heavenly book? We actually know! It is mixed together for the rest of the story, the good and the bad. The voice from heaven is about to tell John to prophesy again – what he learned from eating the little book.

(2) Prophecy Again – Prophecy within the Prophecy (10:11)

Rev 10:11 And they said to me, "You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

The little book had a message about the "peoples and nations and tongues and kings." Some of it was easy to swallow, some of it was hard. Nevertheless, John's job was to tell the rest of the story.

It is important to note at this point that this is a prophecy within the book's prophecy. From 10:11 through 11:14, John is going to foretell the events that will take place after the sounding of the sixth trumpet is complete, which is also called the second woe. He will see the events and write them as he sees them. At this time in the story, the evil four angels and their 200,000-creature army are still warring against one-third of the population.

Chapter 11

(3) Measure Temple, Altar and Worshipers (11:1)

Rev 11:1 Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it."

But before John could write, the LORD wanted him to be brought up to speed concerning several important and special things. The text states that John was tasked with measuring the Temple of God – the whole Temple in heaven - not just the throne room where he has been, but the Golden Altar that has already been mentioned and the size of the multitude that worshiped within its walls.

(4) Dismiss the Outside Court (11:2a)

Rev 11:2a "Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations;

But the courtyard prepared for the Gentiles and surrounding the Temple was not to be measured. Where is this courtyard? Where does it begin, and where does it end? It begins at the outside wall of the Temple, where God lives, and it extends throughout the entire universe of created things. All of God's creation surrounds His eternal home. The courtyard is our temporal home.

Measuring the Temple of God and just looking at the size of the great courtyard for all the nations must have been as sweet as honey in the mouth of John, but then comes the bitter.

(5) Holy City Trampled 42 Months (11:2b)

Rev 11:2b and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months.

This verse had to bring a souring in the stomach of John. Out in the vast courtyard surrounding the Temple of God is a little galaxy that the LORD created, and we call it the *Milky Way*. Deep inside that galaxy is a little planet called *Earth*. In one little spot on *Earth* there is a little plot of land about seven miles wide and seven miles long. That plot of land is called the city of *Jerusalem*. It is known as the *holy city*, and it is reserved by God, and it belongs to God. His people know it as the *holy city*. To think that the *holy city* John loved so much, the city where the LORD was crucified and resurrected, would be trampled on for forty-two months (three and a half years). It is prophecy. It is looking ahead. It is prophecy within prophecy. Other things must take place first. John has seen the wonderful Temple of God that will one day grace the landscape of Jerusalem when it comes down to earth. He has measured it; he knows it. But he has also seen the enemies outside the walls of the current Jerusalem in place on earth. They are ready to attack, devour, and "tread underfoot" for three and a half years or 42 months. As the strong angel said in this section, "...but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets." In other words, the ungodly, the enemies of God, all those in opposition to God, would soon see with their own eyes the total fulfillment of His Word, His prophecy, and His promises. That means the horrific prophecies He directed at His adversaries would be fulfilled. Even though they would be the recipients of the punishment, they would doubt at that moment that they were, in fact, wrong in their belief. Neither would they ever doubt the existence of the supreme God again. Everyone who has sought to live in a world without God will realize that was a mistake. They have been warned repeatedly about their sin by His prophets. John is one of those prophets, and he was honored to be the last to tell the sweet and bitter story that will be recorded in the Bible. Sweet for those who love the LORD, bitter because of those who do not. But that does not mean he was the last of the LORD's prophets. The LORD has two more in his arsenal of prophets, and John was about to see the work being rehearsed at the time of the Tribulation.

(6) Two Witnesses to Prophecy 1260 days (11:3-14)

(a) Their Authority (11:3)

Rev 11:3 "And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

John is still prophesying about the future. This prophecy within the prophecy began in 10:11. The LORD says to John, "I will grant *authority* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." These two witnesses will arrive shortly and "will prophesy." "Will" is an important word in the context of this passage. It means that it did not happen in the past, nor was it happening at this point in the vision, but it would happen next after the four evil angels and the 200,000-creature army are through killing one-third of the population.

The witnesses will be "*clothed in sackcloth*." Sackcloth was made from woven goats' hair. It was thick, coarse, and strong. These sacks were used for carrying all kinds of dry goods. Liquids were carried in bags made from skins. The sackcloth clothing was made from this same material. Sackcloth like this is still available, but most people have never seen it. We can compare it to thick, stiff burlap, made from jute fibers rather than goat hair. Sackcloth clothing in the Bible was usually worn by the prophets of God and these two witnesses are certainly sent from God for a purpose. Elijah and Elisha certainly wore them, and so did John the Baptist.

Great speculation abounds as to the specific identity of these two witnesses. Who are they?