

Text: Rev 10.1-11

The three-fold outline of Revelation (1.19):

1. The things you have seen (the vision of Christ) Rev 1
2. The things which are (the letters to the churches) Rev 2-3
3. The things which must come after these things (Rev 4-22)
 - a. The overture: the scene in heaven (Rev 4-5)
 - b. The seal judgements begin (Rev 6)
 - c. (Parenthesis): the believers of the Tribulation (Rev 7)
 - d. The seventh seal which reveals the seven trumpets (four in chapter 8)
 - e. The fifth and sixth trumpets (Rev 9)
 - f. (Parenthesis): Voices in heaven (Rev 10)**

Again, we hit 'pause' in the book of Revelation.

- Compare Rev 7, the sealing of the 144,000 and the saints in heaven: This occurs between the sixth seal (6.12-17) and the seventh seal (8.1ff.)
- Rev 10 announces many voices in heaven that utter many new things to John, notice the placement of this 'pause': Between the sixth trumpet (9.13-21) and the seventh trumpet (11.15ff.)
(The material in 11.1-14 is part of this 'pause'...)

The revelation of this chapter (and the first part of 11) are intended as reassurance to saints on earth amid all the frightening judgement recorded in conjunction with the trumpets and the bowls to come.

I. The revelation of the mighty angel (1-7)

- A. The strong angel revealed (1)
 1. Because of appearance some identify this as Christ (compare 1.12-16)
 2. The statements of vv. 5-6 seem to make this merely an angel
 3. Also, the description "another strong angel" (see 5.2) ["another" of the same kind] argues for an angel here
 4. Some identify him as Gabriel or Michael, but this is pure speculation

B. The strong angel brings revelation (2-4)

1. Carries an open little book (2)
 - a. Lit. *biblaridion* – a diminutive of *biblion*, a book, this is ‘a little book’
 - b. Not the same scroll unrolled in the seven seal judgements
2. Stands on the sea and the land: the angel’s authority is over the whole world (or authority of his message)
3. Cries out with a loud voice to which the Seven Thunders respond (3)
 - a. As we shall see, these are not merely ‘explosions of sound’
 - b. The seven thunders ‘utter their voices’ – they contain revelation
4. The voices of the seven thunders are sealed (4)
 - a. The only man who ever heard these voices is John the apostle
 - b. John was prohibited from recording what they said

“This suggests to us that there is much more to the judgements of God in the future that we do not yet know. We are given what we have because God deems it useful for us to know these things, but some truths are yet kept hidden from us.”¹

C. The strong angel’s strong oath (5-7)

1. Notice the formal gestures of oath taking (5-6)
 - a. Raised right hand
 - b. Basis of the oath
 - 1) Swore by Him who lives forever and ever
 - 2) Swore by Him who created all things in heaven
 - 3) Swore by Him who created all things on earth
 - 4) Swore by Him who created all things in the sea

¹ Donald C. S. Johnson, *Thru the Bible Notes* (unpublished, 2005).

“The clear reference to God as Creator (cf. 4:11; 14:7) answers evolutionary speculation as to the origin of the earth, and it also affirms the omnipotence of God in dealing with the world in judgment when the time is ripe.”²

c. Content of the oath: there will be no more delay

- 1) KJV has ‘time shall be no longer’
- 2) Since many events yet occur in the rest of the book, this *cannot* mean that time will cease to exist
- 3) What it means is that there will be no more delay in bringing about what he is about to announce

“The idea is that there should no longer be an interval of time, that is, a delay, because (v. 7) the mystery of God will be finished when the seventh angel sounds.”³

2. The solemn pronouncement of the oath (7)

- a. The mystery of God is now to be finished – there is nothing more to reveal about the kingdom of God (the content of prophetic revelation)
- b. This mystery is what His servants the prophets preached (see Dan 12.7)

Dan 12.7 I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half *a time*; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these *events* will be completed.

² John F. Walvoord, “Revelation,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983), 954.

³ Charles C. Ryrie, *Revelation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 68.

“Evidently the seal and trumpet judgments will take some time to unfold giving earth-dwellers time to repent (6:15–17; 9:20–21), but the bowl judgments will come very quickly allowing little or no time for repentance (cf. 2 Pet. 3:1–9).”⁴

II. The meal of the little book (8-11)

A. Instructions for John (8-9)

1. John is to take the book and eat it – the book most likely represents additional revelation John is to deliver
 - a. The rest of the book of Revelation
 - b. Or at least the next few chapters

“Eating is a universal idiom for receiving knowledge (cf. Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:1–3).”⁵

2. John is warned that the book would be sweet to the taste but bitter to the stomach

That is, since it represents the Word of God, God’s word is sweet to the believer, but the contents of this revelation are undoubtedly bitter judgements to come, enough to distress anyone.

Our look into Revelation is something of this sort – it is the Word of God and fascinates us, but the severity of the judgements trouble us as well.

B. John’s reception of the little book (10-11)

1. John finds it to be just as the angel said, sweet to the taste, bitter to the stomach
2. “They” – either God and the angel, or just a special reference to God (“plural of majesty”?) tell John he has much more prophecy to utter – a clue to the contents of the book

⁴ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Rev 10.6.

⁵ Constable, Rev 10.9.

“This renewed commission stresses that what follows would be more burdensome than what John had prophesied so far.”⁶

Conclusion:

The book of revelation is fascinating, but it weighs us down as we contemplate the future destiny of men who do not know God. It ought to serve as a motivation to witness – most of the people you know (outside of church) are destined for God’s judgement.

⁶ Constable, Rev 10.11.