

The Little Book

Revelation 10 Notes

The Angel And The Book (vss. 1-7)

- This angel is distinguished from the seven angels of the trumpets and the four who were bound at the Euphrates (9:14). The entire description of the angel indicates that he was sent on a very special mission and that his work was of unusual importance. The term "cloud" almost always is used in relation to deity or of a divine appearance, often in judgment. Therefore, this indicates that the angel before us comes clothed with a divine mission relating to judgment.
- The "little book" is not to be confused with the book in chapter five. The sealed book, apparently much larger than this "little book," sets forth the destiny of God's eternal purpose, and its contents could be made known only by the Lamb who had overcome. This small book sets forth only one aspect of God's purpose, and was already open, indicating that John could assimilate and understand it. The angel's setting his feet upon the sea and upon the earth indicates the far-reaching inclusiveness of his mission; it pertained to the entire unre-generated world, the great mass of society. It included both proclaiming the gospel and sending judgment.
- "As when a lion roareth" gives emphasis to his mighty voice and great cry. It was heard throughout the whole creation. In ancient times when God warned the wicked He did so with a great roar (Jeremiah 25:30), and when He called His children it was with the roar of a lion (Hosea 11:10). Likewise, when He warned of judgment and called His own to take refuge in Him, it was with a roar that shook the heavens (Joel 3:16). So now, what this angel says should be heard and heeded by all, both the wicked and God's own people.
- Thunder accompanied the plague of hail in Egypt and the appearing of the Lord on Horeb, causing the people to tremble (Exodus 9:23; 19:16; 20:18). The majestic voices of thunder should help us understand that these seven thunders carried some foreboding of power and judgment. The purpose of mentioning the sealing of the message is most likely to assure His saints that God has many unrevealed judgments to be used at His discretion; man cannot know all of God's ways.
- The lifting of the hand always accompanies a solemn oath or swearing, indicating an appeal to God as witness to the oath (cf. Genesis 14:22; Deuteronomy 32:40; Ezekiel 20:5; Daniel 12:7). Mention is made a second time that the angel's feet are upon the sea and upon

the earth, for the word of the oath is going to involve both ocean and land.

- The oath in vs. 6 could not be more solemn, and it guarantees the certain fulfillment of the prophecy. In the light of the overall context, i.e., the prayers of the saints (8:3-5), the trumpets of judgments which followed (8:7-9:21) and the remainder of the vision and the sounding of the seventh trumpet (10:8-11:19), it seems best to interpret the angel as saying that there shall be no more delay before the fulfillment of the divine purpose regarding the fortunes of the church on earth.
- These words of the angel fall into three sections: (1) the days of the voice of the seventh angel; (2) the finishing of the mystery; and (3) the good tidings which He declared by His servants the prophets. What was to be without delay was something other than the end of time; it must have been the completion of the mystery. This mystery was God's plan for human redemption, conceived in His mind, after the counsel of His will and summed up in Christ (Ephesians 1:9-11; 3:8-11). This mystery was something that man could not know until it was revealed (Romans 16:25-26). The complete fulfilling of God's mystery and its revelation was about to be finished. "The prophets" the angel refers to are the Old Testament prophets (cf. 1 Peter 1:10-12). They looked forward to the completion of God's mystery, the gospel, the firm establishment of His kingdom and power, and the destruction of world powers.

The Eating Of The Book (vss. 8-11)

- Once more John hears from heaven the voice which had told him to seal up and not write the things uttered by the seven thunders (vs. 4). In neither instance is the speaker revealed, but the voice which had formerly told John what not to do now tells him what he must do. For the third time John emphasizes the angel's stance, one foot on the sea and one on the earth, thereby stressing the far-reaching inclusiveness of His message. As yet the contents of this small book that lay open in the angel's hand are undisclosed; this is reserved for vss. 9-11.
- This scene from John's vision is similar to Ezekiel's vision of an open roll of a book being handed to him with instruction to take it and eat it (Ezekiel 2:8-3:3). Jeremiah had a similar experience as Ezekiel when he found God's words and ate them: they were unto him as joy and rejoicing, but the loneliness of his position which followed left his heart filled with the deepest grief (Jeremiah 15:16). So it would be with John.

- John responded immediately to the instructions given him, with the results which had been predicted by the angel. The reception and comprehension of God's word is sweet, but fraught with bitterness of spirit in the condemnation of sinners and the proclamation of scripture's judgments against men and nations, declaring the consequences of disobedience, the wickedness of sin and the terror and finality of judgment.
- John must prophesy "again," indicating additional prophecies to those already written in this first section of the book. The sealed book of chapter five contained God's purpose of salvation, set forth in the gospel, and consequences and judgment that would follow. In the second section of the book, we shall find more specific judgments of strong secular powers, religious forces and worldly seductive influences, together with the victory of God's people over all these antagonists. This is the significance of John eating the little book. It was sweet to learn that God's cause would be victorious in His saints, but it was bitter to prophesy of their suffering and of the destructive judgments which would befall the wicked world.