



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Holy Book of Revelation

Chapter 10

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Introduction

Just as we had an interlude between the 6th and 7th Seals that included two visions designed to comfort the saints, we now have an interlude between the 6th and 7th Trumpets with three visions that would have similar effect

Chapter 10 contains the first vision in this second interlude

The Chapter Outlines

- The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 1-4
- The Angel and His Oath 5-7
- John Eats the Little Book 8-11

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



- St. John had before seen the seven angels who were to blow the seven trumpets Revelation 8:2
- He had seen six of them successively blow the trumpet
- He now sees another angel, different from them, and apparently having no connection with them
- Some scholars interpret this figure as another angel/messenger
- Three angelic beings are identified as “*mighty*” in Revelation

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



- The first appears in Revelation 5:2, the second is in Revelation 10:1 and the final occurrence is in Revelation 18:21
- The characteristics associated with "*another mighty angel*" in Revelation 10:1-7 are closely parallel to an angelic being described in Daniel 10:5-6 and 12:5-7
- These similarities have given some interpreters the basis to see a connection between these two texts

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



- Other scholars interpret this “*mighty*” angel as Christ who was formerly represented to us as a Lamb, here as an Angel
- None but He could call the two witnesses, Revelation 11:3, His witnesses
- Besides, the glorious appearance of this angel speaks him no ordinary angel
- Bishop Victorianus confirms that He is Jesus Christ

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



His description:

1. *Mighty*: As in Revelation 7:2
2. *coming down from heaven*: Heavenly
3. *clothed with a cloud*: This has to be a reference to the Glory-Cloud of God

A symbol of majesty and glory, Exodus 16:9-10, 24:16, 34:5;
Numbers 11:25; 1 Kings 8:10; Psalm 97:2;

The Savior also ascended in a cloud, Acts 1:9; and He will again descend in clouds to judge the world, Matthew 24:30, 26:64;
Mark 13:26; Revelation 1:7

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



4. *a rainbow was on his head*: Which was the sign of the covenant made with Noah, Genesis 9:16, and fitted Christ's head, as He brought peace to the world, and to His church in special
5. *his face was like the sun*: So intensely glorious that it could not be looked on

This phrase is reminiscent of John's description of Christ in Revelation 1:14

He Looked like the sun, as it did at the time of His transfiguration and as He is described in Revelation 1:16

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



6. *his feet like pillars of fire*: It is the same description of Christ in Revelation 1:15 Signifying the steadiness and efficacy of his actions and to denote the rapidity and energy of his motions, and the stability of his counsels

It may refer to the state of the church of Christ at this time, which was in the fire of afflictions, when many of its members were persecuted for the sake of the Gospel, and yet were like "*pillars*", firm and unshaken

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



7. *had a little book open in his hand:* This is a small and open book comparing to the one in Chapter 5 which was “*written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals*” (Revelation 5:1)

Meaning probably some design of God long concealed, but now about to be made manifest

Open, This indicates that John would see the contents of the page exposed

If it were written in a language that John could read, he would be able to read whatever was visible to him

Some by it understand the Scriptures

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



The little open book may mean that gospel which is the sword of the Spirit, the weapon of the Church, that Word of God open to all, hidden only from those whom the god of this world has blinded

It is a little book, for the judgment day is near, and only a few prophecies remain unrealized yet

The believers will endure only for a short time

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



8. *his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land:* To let us know the dominion he had over the whole world and all things being under his feet

This signifies that He was the Lord and possessor of both, of the whole world, being the Maker and supporter of it; and that His Gospel should be spread all over the world

Bishop Victorianus says, that His feet are His disciples, that fill the land and the sea, preaching, and witnessing to Him

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



At the time of the Antichrist, many think that all had deviated,
and there are no more believers in God

This may lead the believers to be discouraged

For this reason, our Lord assures them that *"the land and its
fullness, the universe and all its inhabitants"* is His

He is not missing any witness to Him, on land or sea

He is present on earth to keep His Church, and His works,
through His zealous children for the sake of the weak

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



9. *cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars:* So we may pay attention to His call as it is said, *"Hear attentively the thunder of His voice... He thunders with His majestic voice"* (Job 37:2-4)

Another token of the presence of Christ with the Church

The voice is the voice of a courage and strength derived from Him who is the *"Lion of the tribe of Judah."*

The lion's voice is both loud and terrifying

The shout *"a lion roaring"* also recalls Amos 3:8 *"A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy?"*

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



- *seven thunders uttered their voices*, It may signify the denunciations of God's judgments and of His wrath
- As also mentioned in 4:5, 8:5, 11:19, 16:18, and 19:6, thunder appears to be associated with the power of the Lord
- Here, the seven thunders seem to represent the awesome power of the Wrath of the Lord in executing His perfect, complete judgment of the world

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



- He could have written down their utterances
- It was no mere thunder-like sound he heard
- The thunders spoke and he would have continued his writing as he had been commanded, Revelation 1:11, had not the voice out of heaven forbidden him
- Perhaps indicating that they pertain to the ultimate, Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-15), the details of which are not yet ready to be revealed
- They are so terrible that God in mercy withholds them

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 10:1-4



- Withholds them so the godly are thus kept from dreadful thoughts over the evil to come
- And the ungodly are not driven by despair into complete recklessness of life
- It may have contained the name of the Anti-Christ
- We are sure that God demanded that for our salvation, and our good
- People speculate; the contents of the seven thunders are nowhere revealed in the Holy Bible
- So let us be silent as far as the Lord wishes that



The Angel and His Oath 10:5-7

- St. John returns to the, *angel ... standing on the sea*, and reminds us that He has power and authority over the whole world
- *raised up his hand*, This was a gesture used of one that swears
- *raised up his hand to heaven*, a symbolic sign to the Father in preparation of what He is about to say
- The angel with the little book in one hand, raises the other hand toward Heaven and utters a binding oath



The Angel and His Oath 10:5-7

- The great counsels relative to the events already predicted should be immediately fulfilled, and that there should be no longer delay
- This oath reveals the extent of the suffering that the believers endure
- As the Lord says, *"And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened."* (Matthew 24:22)
- This may be a response to the cry of the martyrs under the altar: *"How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"* (Revelation 6:10)



The Angel and His Oath 10:5-7

- Many of the scholars who do not believe that the angel is Christ point to verse 6 as a proof text
- Their premise is that God does not swear oaths to man
- However, there are some passages according to the Old Testament, where God swears an oath, (i.e., Genesis 22:15-18; Number 32:10-11; Deuteronomy 32:40; Ezekiel 16:59 & 17:19) and also in the New Testament, Hebrews 6:13-17, referring back to Genesis 22:18



The Angel and His Oath 10:5-7

- With the blowing of the 7th Trumpet, which is at once to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, all is now ready
- He draws our attention to the seven trumpets, which reveal the secret of God, which His servants the prophets had preached
- This secret is but the end of ages and the coming of the Lord for judgment, right as the prophets had prophesied
- The purpose would be "*finished*,"
- Then all the "*mystery*" would be revealed; the plan would be unfolded; the divine purpose, so long concealed, would be manifested



The Angel and His Oath 10:5-7

- The Greek word (*euallegizo*) translated “*declared*” means “to bring good news or glad tidings.”
- The period of God’s patience is over
- In fact, the verb translated “finished” is a form of the verb Jesus used at His crucifixion when He cried out, “*It is finished*” (John 19:30)
- God is bringing complete closure
- *Mystery* does not imply a deep, dark secret
- On the contrary, it is an open secret, or divine plan, that God *announced to his servants the prophets*

John Eats the Little Book

10:8-11



- *the voice which I heard from heaven*, The voice mentioned in Revelation 10:4
- John is ordered to take this book, by which some understand the Scriptures
- *open*, To signify that its contents were not to be kept secret like those of the seven thunders, but revealed for the instruction, direction, encouragement, or warning of mankind
- John approached the angel and requested the little book

John Eats the Little Book

10:8-11



- *Take and eat it*, John is being challenged to know and understand God's prophetic Word
- However, biblical knowledge is not merely knowledge for the sake of knowledge
- God wanted John to digest the contents of the book
- The eating of the little book, is the complete mastering of the contents of the book, its meaning, till the principles and truths are thoroughly familiar and loved

John Eats the Little Book

10:8-11



- The image of eating the roll or the book is derived from the Old Testament
- We meet with it in Ezekiel 2:8-9, 3:1-3 and Jeremiah 15:16
- The passage in Ezekiel is probably the basis of the present passage
- The Psalmist says, *“how sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth”* (Psalm 119:103)
- Bishop Victorianus explains that the reason for the sweetness, is the reward he gets for preaching it. Its bitterness in his stomach is because of what it contains of bitter sufferings.

John Eats the Little Book

10:8-11



- *will make your stomach bitter*, This book reveals the purpose of God towards His Church, also carries within it, the bitter pains that she will suffer, especially at the time of the Antichrist
- It may also denote the difficulties that any faithful servant faces in his service
- *will be as sweet as honey in your mouth*, However, preaching God's word and evangelizing is a joyful work even if it carries within it pain and suffering
- Sweet because it talks about what God does for His children and His Church

John Eats the Little Book

10:8-11



- The Evangelist takes the book, as he was commanded, out of the angel's hand, eats it up, and finds it, as he was told, in his mouth *as sweet as honey*
- The effect immediately followed: that is, as soon as he was made acquainted with the contents of the book, either, requiring him to deliver some message of woe and wrath which it would be painful to deliver, or that the consequence of receiving it was to bring on bitter persecutions and trials

John Eats the Little Book

10:8-11



- It is sweet, because of our understanding God's purpose towards His children, His justification to many, during their great distress
- It is bitter because of what they go through in their troubles, and because of their grief over the perverts
- They say as the psalmist said, *"Indignation has taken hold of me Because of the wicked, who forsake Your law"* (Psalm 119:53)
- He is told that the bitterness will arise in connection with his prophecies with regard to peoples and kings
- God's messengers must not keep back any part of the counsel of God

John Eats the Little Book

10:8-11



- The word "*prophecy*" here is evidently used in the large sense of making known divine truth in general
- Not in the comparatively narrow and limited sense in which it is commonly used, as referring merely to the foretelling of future events
- The meaning is, that, as a consequence of *eating* the book, mastering of its contents completely, one must proclaim the Word of God, the divine truth, and to make the message of God known to mankind

John Eats the Little Book

10:8-11



- He had already prophesied before *many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings* (whether Nero or Domitian was the last of these) and he would have to do the same “again.”
- The apostle is made to know that this book of prophecy, which he had now taken in, was not given him merely to gratify his own curiosity, or to affect him with pleasure or pain, but to be communicated by him to the world
- He is ordered to prepare to convey those declarations and will of God which are of great importance to all the world, and to the highest and greatest men in the world



Discussion

- Why do you think Jesus commanded John to seal up what the seven thunders said?
- What is the mystery of God that will be accomplished at the sounding of the seventh trumpet?
- What does the eating of the little book mean?
- What kind of hope emerges from chapter 10?