

Revelation 10 | Big Angels, Little Books and Belly Aches

Where we are now...

- An interlude (between 6th and 7th trumpets)
- Meant for our encouragement
 - Cf. between the 6th and 7th seal (**Revelation 7:9-17**)
 - Before the worst of the seals
 - Cf. Before the worst of the trumpets (7 bowls)

The Angel

- **Clouds** = God's righteous strength (Cf. Christ's Second Coming; OT)
- **Rainbow** = God's Covenantal Mercy and Grace (Cf. The flood)
 - This angel is coming representing God's strength and mercy
- But also, His piercing light and justice (**face like the sun** and **feet like fire**)
- The enormity of the moment (and God's coming justice) is pictured in the enormity of the angel
 - **Sea and land** (v. 2)
 - **Roar like a lion** (v. 3)

But this is not a mere show of power—there is a message to be communicated here

- Actually 2 messages
 - **The little book** (v. 2)
 - **The 7 peals of thunder that speak** (v. 3)
- **There is both (1) revelation and (2) mystery**
 - Something to be **revealed** and something to be **concealed**
 - There is something we need to hear (in and about **the book**)
 - Something we cannot hear (**v. 4**)
 - We have no idea what was revealed in the **thunder**
 - God speaking?
 - **The LORD thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded.** – Psalm 18:13 (NIV)
 - John was told **not to** reveal it to us—it remains a mystery
 - What are we to make of that?
 - **Can we trust God in what He does not reveal?**
 - Much of life is this kind of mystery
 - Beyond our comprehension?
 - We know that someone knows the answer—just not us
 - We search high and low—and often we come to realize: “**Only God knows**” and He isn't telling
 - We struggle with the question: “**Can I trust God with what I do not (cannot) know and what He will not tell me?**”
 - **seal up; do not write**

“If knowing answers to life's questions is absolutely necessary to you, then forget the journey. You will never make it, for this is a journey of unknowables—of unanswered questions, enigmas, incomprehensibles, and most of all, things unfair.” –Madame Guyon (d. 1717)

Think about the 21 Egyptians Christians beheaded this past week by the Islamic State

- **Where was God? This was incomprehensible and unjust! Where was God?**
- **Revelation 6:9-11** (**a little while longer**)
 - This is, in part, how Revelation helps us
 - Though the world is so perverse and there is much injustice
 - In just **a little while** God's righteous justice is coming
- **Revelation 20:4** (**they reigned with Christ**)

Here is how Revelation is helping us here

- There is so much that we do **not** know or comprehend
 - We **do know** where God is (**Chapter 4**) **and** what Christ has done for us (**Chapter 5**)
 - And **we do** know how it ends (**Revelation 21:1-5**) = “do not write” versus “write this down”

We can surmise what the **little book** was all about (i.e. the finish—a **mystery** revealed; **v. 7**)

- But the **thunder** is a mystery still concealed to us (everything—**seven peals**—about the in between)

What we do know is enough—and it far out shadows what we don't know

- **For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.** –Romans 8:18 (NASB)
- We actually know **where God is** and we know how it all ends! (**glory that far outweighs**)
- This is what we **need** to know (**Revelation 10:5-7**)
 - There is an end in sight now (**Revelation 11:15**)

Therefore:

- We can endure the unknowns
- And we can accept and embrace the **bitterness** of God's Word
- **Revelation 10:8-11**

What is the **bitterness** of God's word?

- Here in **Revelation 10**, it was the fact of coming judgment (**it was also sweet**)
- There are many ways in which God's word is like this for us
 - Matthew 16:24-26 (NASB)
- There are those who do not tolerate the **bitterness** of the Word
- As soon as the **demands of discipleship** press upon them they refuse
 - Mark 4:5-6 and 4:16-17 (NASB)
 - James 1:21-25 (NLT)

The Word of God is meant to be obeyed!

- Obedience can be **upsetting** —but it is always **sweet** (and vise versa)
- Psalm 19:7-11 (NIV)
- We must **ingest**, **absorb** and **assimilate** the Word—not merely “Amen” it

Your words were found and I ate them, and Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts. --Jeremiah 15:16 (NASB)

What we do know satisfies and settles what we do not know

- Therefore, we can begin to obey Jesus without question

1. Something to forsake (a sin)
2. Something to forget (a grievance)
3. Someone who needs forgiveness (the gospel)

The implications of Revelation are that there are many who need to hear the Gospel

- **Revelation 7:9** (**every tongue, tribe and nation**)
- Judgment is coming (**Revelation 10:11**)

Will you play a part in the salvation of the nations?

- In light of all we have been learning about the coming wrath of God
- His mercy and grace are here now—people just need to know
- What are you doing?
- In light of who Jesus is and what He has done and will do—what are you doing?