

Session Eighteen:

Revelation 10:1-11

“The Bitter Sweet Message”

I) Introduction

- A) **Revelation 10** is the 2nd parenthetical (explanation) chapter in the Revelation that is entirely given to John’s encounter with the mighty angel and the open scroll in his hand.
- B) In **Revelation 10** we gain insight into what kind of end-time messenger God is going to raise up throughout the earth to carry the fullness of the contents that are revealed through the open scroll which include both blessing and judgment.

II) The Mighty Descending Angel (Revelation 10:1-3)

- A) **Revelation 10:1-3** *“I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, and cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices.”*

- 1) Here, John encounters a mighty (strong) angel who is pictured in a specific, intentional way and holding a very important book. There are three primary things that we gather from this angel;
 - 1. He’s coming down from heaven = This is a statement about God’s wisdom which comes from heaven and it’s opposed to the devil’s wisdom which comes from the earth (**James 3:13-18**).
 - 2. He’s described with seven adjectives = What John sees about this angel gives us clarity into the nature of the messengers that God has and is raising up.
 - (a) He was a mighty angel = This speaks about the people of God operating in the power of the Holy Spirit, specifically at the end of this age.
 - (b) Clothed in a cloud = This speaks of the shekinah glory of God resting upon the people of God in a discernible and tangible way (**Ex. 14:19; Song Of Songs 3:6**).
 - (c) A rainbow was on his head = This lets us know that the end time message of judgment will be coupled with the mercy of God (**Genesis 9:13; Revelation 4:4**).
 - (d) His face was like the sun = This is the reality that a burning heart produces a bright countenance. The final generation will be filled with the bridegroom message (**John 5:35; Revelation 4:3; 22:17**).
 - (e) His feet were like pillars of fire = This lets us know that the end time message of mercy will be coupled with the justice and judgments of God (**Malachi 3:2; Revelation 1:15; 2:18**). The people of God will agree with God regarding the challenging aspects of God’s nature (Judgment).

- (f) *His feet were on the sea and on the land* = This lets us know that the great eschatological move of God will be global not local.
- (g) *He cried out like a roaring lion* = This tells us that the Church will be praying and preaching from a prophetic Spirit (**Amos 3:8; Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:14-21**).
- 3. *He's holding an OPEN book* = I believe that this book (Biblion=little scroll, writing, Bible) is actually the scroll from **Revelation 5:1**. And I believe that this angel is the same angel from **Revelation 5:2**.
 - (a) **Revelation 5:1** *"And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written..."*
 - (b) **Revelation 5:2** *"Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice..."*
 - (c) The word mighty used here in **Revelation 10:1** is Strong's Greek word #2478 and it means strong and is the same word used in **Revelation 5:2**.
 - (d) This is the fulfillment of **Revelation 1:1** which says *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God (the Father) gave Him (Jesus Christ) to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John."*
 - (e) The Father, in **Revelation 5:1** possessed the scroll until Jesus took it from the Father's hand in **Revelation 5:7**. And in **Revelation 10:1**, after the seals have been broken off, Jesus gives the now open scroll to an angel who gives it to John in **Revelation 10:9-10**.

III) The Sovereignty Of God Over The Affairs Of Humanity (Revelation 10:4-7)

- A) **Revelation 10:4-7** *"Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them. The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets."*
 - 1) When this strong angel cries out John hears seven thunders utter their voices and as he is about to start writing what he heard, God instructs him not to write anything but to seal everything up. I have nothing to say about this.
 - 2) This angel that John is seeing on both the land and the sea is contrasting the antichrist and Babylon who also will be covering both the land and the sea. The difference is that the angel and his descriptive ministry has come from heaven and the antichrist and his descriptive ministry comes from beneath.
 - 1. **Revelation 13:1** *"Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast (the antichrist) rising up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns..."*

2. **Revelation 13:11** *"Then I saw another beast (the false prophet) coming up out of the earth..."*
 3. **Revelation 17:1,3,15** *"...Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters...So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns...Then he said to me, the waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues."*
- 3) Though great crisis is ensuing on earth, unlike any other time in human history, the angel swears by Him who lives forever and ever and created the heavens, the earth and beneath the earth.
 - 4) This understanding, coupled with the seven descriptive characteristics of those end-time messenger's will give confidence for bold, public proclamation in the face of certain physical death.

IV) The Open Scroll And John's Command To Eat It (Revelation 10:8-11)

A) **Revelation 10:8-9** *"Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth. So I went to the angel and said to him, give me the little book. And he said to me, take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth."*

- 1) What John was being commanded by God to do mirrored what God asked Ezekiel to do in **Ezekiel 3:1-4**.

1. Revelation 10:8-11	Ezekiel 3:1-4
(a) The little book	A scroll of a book
(b) Take and eat the book	Eat this scroll
(c) Sweet as honey in the mouth	Sweet as honey to eat
(d) Belly was bitter	Belly was bitter
(e) You must prophesy	Speak to Israel
- 2) It's clear that neither Ezekiel nor John, who were both seasoned prophets had any idea how bitter the Word of God was when it's fully digested.
- 3) I believe the reason why God instructs both of them to eat the scroll is because God doesn't have robotic prophets. He has prophets with human heart and human emotions. Relational prophets made in the image of a Relational God.

B) **Revelation 10:10** *"Then I took the little book out of the angels hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter."*

- 1) As John first tastes the scroll it's sweet to his mouth, but as it's fully digested, it becomes severe bitterness in his stomach. The two-fold nature of the scroll unfolds it's clear impact upon Johns heart; extreme joy and extreme pain.
- 2) Beloved, John's encounter is a pattern/template for every end-time forerunner that wants to carry God's heart to nations. The message of Jesus' return is coupled with both positives and negatives.

- 3) There are many today in the body of Christ that work to diminish one facet of the scroll and to do so is grave error. We can't diminish the sweetness of redemption and justice in a sin ravished world. But we also cant diminish the severity of God's judgments and the trouble that's coming to the human race.
 - 4) We too, just like John, have to preach the "Bitter Sweet" message of the entirety of the Bible. The introduction to our faith and our enjoyment of Christ is sweetness, but the global dynamics and pressures that we will face awaiting our redemption are severely bitter, both for us, other Christians and the untold billions that don't know Christ.
- C) **Revelation 10:11** *"And he said to me, you must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."*
- 1) John's mannerisms, heart posture before God and people and His understanding of the two-fold nature of God (Blessing and Judgment) would become a template for every person that would read the Revelation after him.
 - 2) This meant that prior to him prophesying, preaching and declaring what was coming, he had to give himself to eating the scroll and fully digesting its contents.
 - 3) What's true for John is also true for us. We also must give ourselves to eating the scroll and fully digesting its contents so that we can rightly share it with others.