

a magnificent command! What a privilege for a human to be so ordered.

b. Received

Apparently John moved from his position in the vision and went to do exactly what he was told (v. 9). He not only took the book, but he ate it! This sounds like an Old Testament incident (Jer. 15:16). As he ate the book, which indicates he digested its message, it was something sweet as honey in his mouth (Psa. 19:10; 119:103). This probably refers to the judgment of God upon the wicked. For John, representing all the true and faithful, the day of judgment against the enemy is a sweet message! But the same book is bitter in his stomach! What is this? This may well indicate that along with the enemies, Israel will also suffer. This is a pain to John. In any case, along with the sweet items of the message, there are those which when given further reflection are a bitterness to John. It is generally true: God's Word moves against the wicked and those who reject Him, and this may well include those who are dear to us, as it seems to be in this instance.

c. Furthered

John is not allowed to stop here. He is told that he must continue to give forth the Word of God. This concerns "peoples, nations, tongues, and kings." As one reads the remainder of the Book of Revelation, this is precisely what the apostle does write about. Judgment comes with sweetness and bitterness, but the truth must yet be prophesied by His faithful servant. There is yet more to make known! So, John, prophesy!

Conclusion When will all our sorrows be over? Only when the Son of God comes to take over His rightful place on this earth. He it is Who must reign. Thank God the program is set and we have the privilege to know when it will take place.. It may seem now that the end is a long way off, but God has it assuredly in His plan. That is the best for all. We trust in the purpose of an all-mighty and all-loving God. Amen.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

"No Longer Delay"
Revelation 10:1-11

Introduction

1. Six trumpets of judgment have been blown (chaps. 8, 9). The intensity of the wrath of God has been experienced, yet men have refused to repent (9:20,21). They have persisted in their heretical worship and activities!

2. Now comes an interlude in the series of judgments. One question which must be raised is: How much longer will God allow this rebelliousness to continue? There is another: What is going to happen with Israel in all of this tribulation experience? Still another: What is the Lord Jesus Christ doing at this time? Probably there are many more questions, but these appear to have an answer here.

3. This is material included in John's vision (vv. 1,5). It is not the figment of someone's imagination, but it is the very Word of God! Look what is recorded:

1. THE MESSENGER OF GOD vv. 1-4.

a. Identification v. 1.

The mighty angel noted here comes down from heaven. The present tense of the verb points to the process which took place before John's eyes. This is not one of the angels related to the seven trumpets, because the seventh is mentioned later (11:15). It is not the Lord, for this angel swears by Him later (v. 6). Hence, here is a special mighty angel sent by Christ to declare His design and purpose. He comes with delegated authority from the Lord.

b. Description vv. 1,2.

1) Body The verb here shows the angel is completely wrapped around (perfect passive) with a cloud.

2) Head The word for rainbow is only used here and 4:3 in the Revelation. This points to mercy in the midst of judgment (cf. Gen. 9:13). Just like God!

3) Face This is a different word from the one used of Christ (1:16). However, it shows the angel is a true delegate of Christ.

4) Feet The pillars of fire speak of judgment, hence the angel is set for this.

5) Hand The diminutive of a diminutive is used (cf. 5:1). Here the book is entirely open (perfect passive verb). It speaks of the title deed of the universe. Christ is now ready, through His agents, to take over. This is why the book is opened and the angel arrives.

6) Feet One of the angel's feet is on the sea and the other on the earth. This provides a colossal size for the angel. It is a bold and graphic picture of the Lord taking possession of what is His by right and title (John 1:11). This figure is also given in the Old Testament for possession (Josh. 1:3).

7) Mouth (cry) The cry of the angel was like the roar of a lion (cf. Isa. 21:8; Amos 1:2). It is not that the cry is unintelligible, but that it is loud. The verb is onomatopoeic and was originally used of the lowing of cattle. The sound is followed by thunder. This could be expected, for God's voice is like this (Psa. 29). Indeed, in that Psalm (29), God's voice speaks seven times. Let none take this matter lightly!

c. Action vv. 3,4.

John intended to write what he had seen and heard, but he was hindered. The voice of the Lord from heaven stopped him from writing. The aorist imperative verb "seal" points to the urgency of the command: "seal it at once!" Another aorist is used ("write not") to show that John is not to commence any indication of what is involved here. This is the only part of the Book of Revelation in which there is a sealing of truth. Someday God will make it plain. For the present, it is withheld (Deut. 29:29).

2. THE MYSTERY OF GOD vv. 5-7.

a. Guaranteed vv. 5,6.

The verb "stand" (v. 5) is in the perfect tense, thus noting that the position of the angel is permanent.

Christ's messenger has taken over the universe and the possession is eternal. Now he lifts his hand to heaven and swears by God. It should be noted that John cannot mention God without indicating that He it is Who made (direct creationism!) the three major areas of the universe: heaven, earth, and sea. Of course, all that is within these three is also His creative work. So, what the angel has to say is guaranteed by God Himself!

b. Explained

The message the angel brings is related to a specific item: "that there should be time no longer." This AV phrase is understood to mean: no more time will pass before judgment is executed. It is as if the angel said: "delay no longer!" God's plan for the total take over of the universe by Christ and the final adjustments to His rule must now take place! God's hour has finally come.

c. Identified

This aspect of God's plan is called the "mystery of God" (v. 7). It means that God has now come to unveil something which had been hidden, declared only to the initiated, but now fully made known. The verb "finished" is futuristic aorist. "Declared" means to "gospelize" or "declare good news" and this is exactly what God did to Old Testament prophets concerning the coming take over by God (see all passages related to the Tribulation and Millennium in the Old Testament). Hence, the time has now come for the final judgment of men on earth with a view to the establishment of the rule of Christ--this is the mystery of God. Here is the answer to the frequently asked questions: "How long will God allow this thing to go on?" "Why doesn't God do something to end all this sinful activity?" It is not until this point in His program that the answer is given, but it does come! Hallelujah!

3. THE MESSAGE OF GOD vv. 8-11.

a. Addressed

John is told by a voice from heaven to take the little book from the hand of the mighty angel. This is