

The Angel and the Little Scroll

Revelation Chapter 10

I. The “Doomsday Clock”.

A. “Time is short! Man must save the world!”

1. Nuclear threat/capabilities, Emerging technologies, Biotech, climate change, world conflicts, man-made viruses.

B. There is nothing man can do to save the world!

1. Omnipotent, sovereign, Almighty God is completely in control of the future.

II. The “Sevens”.

A. The seven seals—six seals are opened bringing six judgements and God’s wrath.

1. 1/3 of the world is destroyed, etc.
2. A respite after the sixth seal, then with the opening of the 7th seal, the seven trumpet judgments are released.

B. The seven trumpets—six intensified judgments released and God’s wrath.

1. Over half of the world’s population dead or removed, etc.
2. Another respite after the sixth trumpet (a pattern!), then with the 7th trumpet, the 7 bowls of wrath are released.
3. No respite in the seven bowls: After the seventh bowl judgement, it is “done”.

III. The second respite: the Angel and the little scroll.

A. The identity of the Angel (V.1)

1. Jesus Christ?
 - a. Revelation 1:7
 - b. A cloud, a rainbow, face like the sun, feet like pillars.
2. Gabriel? Michael (“who is like God”)?

B. The Impact of the Angel (Vs. 2-3).

1. The little scroll—A continuation of the scroll in ch.5—the rest of the judgments
2. A foot on land and one on the sea—Represents God’s sovereignty over all.

3. The seven peals of thunder—God’s intervention into human affairs.

C. Instruction from the voice in heaven (V.4).

1. “Seal it all up!”—do not reveal the seven peals of thunder.
 - a. Too terrifying?

D. The announcement of the strong angel (Vs. 5-7).

1. The angel makes a vow-- for God: No more delay! (Vs.5-6).
2. “The mystery of God is finished” (V.7).
 - a. Mystery in the Bible—truth that God has hidden but will reveal in His time.
 - b. At least 27 mysteries from the Old Testament have been revealed in the New Testament.
 - c. “*The mystery of God is finished*”—all the great mysteries of God through the ages will be resolved.

-- Romans 16:25-26

IV. God’s practical application (Vs. 8-11).

A. John takes the scroll from the angel (V. 8).

B. John is instructed by the angel to take the book and eat it (V.9).

1. Precedent—Ezekiel 2:9-3:3.
2. *Eating the book*—a picture of consuming, absorbing, taking in God’s Word.

C. God’s Word is:

1. Sweet like honey in your mouth—Psalm 119:103.
 - a. The great hope in the gospel of Jesus Christ-- our salvation.
 - b. Our eternity in the Kingdom of God....etc.
2. Bitter to the stomach.
 - a. The countless people who have rejected Christ—eternal damnation.
 - b. The countless martyred for their proclamation for Christ.

D. SO...PREACH THE WORD!

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Revelation Chapter 10

Two related events in 1945 ushered in a new world reality...a reality that man truly had the capability of ending the existence of life on this planet...two atomic bombs let loose on two separate cities in Japan... ending upwards to 256,000 lives and totally devastating the landscape.

The product of the Manhattan Project lead by Albert Einstein and J. Robert Oppenheimer... another product came out of the Manhattan Project...two years later was the “*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist*”

Initially a newsletter...then a magazine...now a website... to educate policy makers and the general public on man-made threats to human existence...out of this came the “Doomsday Clock”...which is still set every year...how close are we to a total doomsday?

Using the imagery of apocalypse (midnight on the clock) and the contemporary idiom of nuclear explosion (countdown to zero) to convey threats to humanity and the planet. The Doomsday Clock is set every year by the Bulletin’s Science and Security Board ...The Clock has become a universally recognized indicator of the world’s vulnerability to global catastrophe caused by man-made technologies.

In other words... a countdown clock to world-wide total apocalypse... In 1947...two years after the two atomic bombs...the world very uneasy about the future... the clock was set at 7 min. to midnight...midnight being the end... In January of this year... 20025...

After evaluating the wars in the Ukraine and Israel and the Middle East... nuclear capabilities and threats...drone technology and emerging technologies in general... AI... the Biotech world... strange man-made diseases... climate change... political disfunction... increase in violence....

The clock has been moved to 89 seconds to midnight....89 seconds”... “*It is totally obvious we are on the cusp of being engulfed by any number of major man-made catastrophes*”...The purpose of this clock is to wake mankind up... to get man to “repent”....change his course...Man is about to destroy mankind... ***man has to save the planet!***

There is nothing man can do to save the planet!

Living in this reality has led to what is called **existential dread**... Existential dread...anxiety angst, arising from the awareness of our own mortality and the absence of inherent meaning in existence....a profound sense of unease... questioning whether life has a grand purpose or if we are merely drifting through an indifferent universe.

The Bible addresses existential dread...through the gospel of Jesus Christ... mortality is answered... through Him is eternal life... meaning and purpose is defined through Christ...He gives it....and

Specifically the Book of Revelation screams out that there is an omnipotent all Sovereign God who has a plan for the universe...has a plan for mankind... a purpose in all that he does...and through Him we have purpose...while the universe may seem “indifferent”... it is completely under the control of the Almighty...

Through Jesus Christ... we can stare at the Doomsday clock as they shave off seconds... that there is NOTHING to fear... there is nothing to have anxiety over...He has a plan... and man is not in charge...and in these pages the future is revealed to us...and for those in Christ.... It is a glorious future.

Revelation reveals that glorious future for the believer... but it also reveals the tragic tribulation period that precedes the final return of our Christ...an unimaginable 7 years that God will dispense His judgement and wrath on a rebellious world.

The church has been removed prior to this tribulation period... and what is left are those who rejected Christ... a remnant of lost Jews....[and the true Doomsday clock is activated]...

It began with Jesus opening the seven seals of judgement from the scroll handed to Him by God...hail, fire mixed with blood rains on earth... 1/3 of the earth burned...1/3 of the trees and 1/3 of sea creatures... destruction universal... at the sixth seal... right before the opening of the seventh... was a time of respite... a pause of the judgement and wrath...

Good news... the remnant of Jews are saved and become evangelists for the gospel... and countless others come to Christ... Christ opens the seventh seal and out come the seven trumpets...

Six intensified judgements and wrath are released...by the end of that sixth trumpet over 1/2 of the world's population will be killed or removed... much of the earth burned and poisoned, destroyed... the abyss is unlocked by Satan and the demons are released...darkness over the earth.... The horror of a vast evil army...plagues are rampant...

The sixth trumpet sounded... but before the seventh sounds... God again pushes the pause button... another respite... notice a pattern?... after every sixth...there is a pause... a moment of grace... right before the next intensified set of judgements are released...

This time... is the longer of respites...it runs from chapters ten through verse 14 of chapter 11...a pause... when the final trumpet blows.... The worst of the judgements will be released....through The seven bowls.... On the seventh bowl... it is done.

Let's embrace this pause and take a look at this important passage... we ended last week having the sixth angel blow the sixth trumpet... now all the devastating horrifying judgement is interrupted by another angel who arrives in John's vision...

Basically three headings... **the Identity of the angel...the impact of the angel...and instruction from a voice in heaven...**

Read verse 1

1. The Identity of the angel

Who is this angel?... angels are very important in Revelation mentioned more than 60 times...three of those are “mighty” or “strong” angels...this is a “mighty angel”...should we leave it there or speculate?

I have already speculated for us and decided to leave it right there...this is just a “mighty angel”... but just so you know where speculators have gone... many believe this angel is Jesus Christ...

- 1:7—John sees Jesus **Coming in the clouds and every eye will see Him...**which is similar to this **mighty angel coming down out of heaven clothed with a cloud.**
- In that this mighty angel is **clothed with a cloud...**we could think of clouds in the Bible that are associated with majesty, glory and power... remember God led Israel through the wilderness by a “cloud” (Exodus 16:10). God appeared to Moses in a cloud of glory (Exodus 24). And **Jesus coming out of heaven with a cloud** is the picture of coming down from heaven in glory.
- A rainbow is mentioned... **a rainbow on His head...** we know a rainbow don't we?... back in Genesis...Noah and the Flood and the promise of the rainbow... a sign of God's faithfulness...His covenant mercy in the midst of judgement....Jesus is certainly God's covenant in the midst of judgement for sin.
- This mighty angel has a **face like the sun...**remember when Moses was in the presence of God so his face shone...like the sun... this mighty angel comes down from heaven...having been in the presence of the Lord his face is glowing...

Revelation 1:16 Describing Jesus **and having in His right hand seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword which comes out of His mouth, and His face was like the sun shining in its power.** Jesus face shining with glory.

- **His feet were like pillars of fire...** a picture of stability and uncompromising holiness... back in 1:15...talking about Jesus... **His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace...**

So this mighty angel certainly is characterized by things that are associated by Jesus Christ's presence and attributes... so that at a minimum tells us about this mighty angel... he is Christ-like...he is special... but it doesn't convince me he is Jesus.

- In the New Testament... Jesus is never seen or described as an angel... in fact... Hebrews chapter 1 goes to lengths to argue that Jesus is more excellent than angels and **He has inherited a more excellent name than they.**
- I think the most convincing argument against this mighty angel being Jesus is the Greek word *allos* which is translated *another*... **then I saw *another* strong angel coming down out of heaven.**

allos means *another of the same kind*... in other words... this strong angel is like the kind of angel the previous six were... if this was a unique angel... a one of a kind...different than the previous six angels... if this angel was Jesus Christ it would have said *heteros*—**strong angel**...another of a different kind.

- Later towards the end of Revelation...chapter 22...John is told by an angel to not worship angels...there is a distinction between God and angels...

There are many more reasons I don't think this **strong angel** is Jesus... some say it is Gabriel or Michael... the archangel...by the way.... Do you know what Michael means in Hebrew?...***who is like God***...so it could be Michael... I'll just stick with a special "strong angel" with Christ-like characteristics...

At least... that's my view... if you don't like it... find your own.

2. The Impact of the angel

Read verse 2

There's this "little scroll"... What is that?... note that this little scroll is **already open... he had in his hand a little scroll which was open**...this is not a new scroll...I think it is the continuation of the scroll that had the seven seals...

It probably is smaller now since many of the judgements have come to pass... and in the remaining scroll will be the upcoming bowl judgements.... What's important is the picture here of this strong angel standing with **one foot on the sea and one foot on the land**...

I think this is a picture of **God's complete control over the entire world**...one leg on land... one on the sea.. this is important... we need to see this... in light of what is going to happen... we need to know... God's got this...

In chapter 13... we see a picture of the dragon standing on the sea shore, the Beast coming out of the sea on to the land...evil...Satan...He wants what's only God's... God is reminding us before we get to chapter 13... He has it all under His control.

1 Corinthians 10:26 **The earth is the Lord's , and all it contains.**

This little respite... this interlude between judgements sheds light on man's biggest questions... *where is God?*... the Great Tribulation...3 ½ years of the worst of the judgements... is about to launch... man is going to ask... *where is God in all this?*

That is what I hear today?... every time there is a mass shooting in a... a school, a synagogue... a church...an assassination.... I hear *where is God in this? Where is God when we need Him?*... I hear people everywhere saying *the world is chaotic*.... You think it is chaotic now?... wait until after the seventh trumpet!

This picture... of this strong angel... representing God... one of His messengers telling and showing us... God is in control!...He is in charge... we have nothing to worry about.... Things ARE NOT OUT OF CONTROL.... THEY ONLY SEEM THAT WAY.

He puts up kings and He takes them down... **My emails are a little slow lately so let me fix that**... Remember Bill Clinton...Barack Obama?...Joe Biden?.... God put them in as presidents of the United States!

Now if that makes you happy... how's this.... God put Donald J. Trump into office as well!...God is literally in control!... God is not Democrat or Republican... He is God and He is in charge!...this should be of great comfort....

Read verse 3

This strong angel is announcing God's intervention into human affairs... let me show you an example... in Job 4:9-10... we peeked at Job last week... it is the book to go to when you're going through hard times... and you want to see someone who has it worse than you do... I love Job's friends giving Job all sorts of bad advice... Job turns to them and says **miserable comforters are you all!**

In Job 4:9-11 we see God's power and intervention in our lives:

**9 By the breath of God they perish,
And by the wind of His anger they come to an end.
10 The roaring of the lion and the voice of the fierce lion,
And the teeth of the young lions are broken.**

**The lion perishes for lack of prey,
And the whelps of the lioness are scattered.**

Hosea 5:14

The impact of this strong angel is twofold... it pictures God's control as He stands one foot on the sea and one foot on the land...it also pictures God's cry of judgement to come for everyone to hear... like a roaring lion...

**For I will be like a lion to Ephraim
And like a young lion to the house of Judah**

**I, even I, will tear to pieces and go away;
I will carry away, and there will be none to deliver.**

Hosea 11:10... the same book

**They will walk after Yahweh;
He will roar like a lion;
Indeed, He will roar,
And His sons will come trembling from the west.**

Amos 3:8

**A lion has roared! Who will not fear?
Lord Yahweh has spoken! Who can but prophesy?**

Here in Revelation 10:3...and He cried out with a loud voice, as **when a lion roars**. And when he had cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices.

Seven again is "completeness" or "Perfection"... thunder in scripture is usually associated with judgement... the angel cries out... but seven peals of thunder answer... don't ask me what the thunder said...I don't know... the bible doesn't say! But we get...

3. Instruction from a voice from Heaven

Read verse 4

So John gets instructions from a voice in heaven... regarding these seven peals of thunder... most likely seven coming judgements... Obviously this voice... God... told him what the judgements were to be...

Right when John grabbed his stylus and parchment to write them down for all of us... God says **"seal them up! Don't write them down!"**... this is the exact opposite of what Jesus told him to do in the beginning... *write these things down!*...

This had to be frustrating to John!... It's like when someone says to you.... "you got to hear this... this is absolutely amazing".... You lean in and he says "ahh, I can't tell you!"

Later... in Revelation 22... the Lord says to John in verse 10... **Do not seal up the words of the prophesy of this book, for the time is near.**

What's it all about in chapter 10... *what is the point of this voice telling John not to let anyone know what has been said?*... I think... God wants to spare having the knowledge of the terrible suffering of God's people... or the judgement from these seven peals of thunder is too terrifying to be revealed... somethings you just don't want to know!... ***seal it up... don't say anything!***

Is God in complete control?... YES!... Is He in complete charge of the earth?... YES!... but there will be some terrible things God's people will have to suffer through... terrible things that those who reject the gospel will have to experience...

4. The announcement of the strong angel

Read verse 5

This is the picture of taking a vow... we see this throughout the Old Testament... it's the idea that *when I lift my right hand to heaven... whatever I promise to do... as God is my witness I will do it!*... It's like when we put our hands on the Bible.... Or when you say something like... *I swear to God*... but you shouldn't!

This angel is making a vow under God...

Read verse 6

James 5:12 tells you and me... **do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your yes be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment....** We shouldn't go to someone and tell them something on a stack of Bibles... why not just tell them the truth?

Tell the truth all the time you don't need to swear to God... but this strong angel is doing something else... He is swearing something regarding God Himself... God is making the promise... He swears by the Almighty sovereign creator of the universe... that the Almighty sovereign creator of the universe is NOT going to delay judgement any longer...

Remember the Christian martyrs under the alter in chapter 6:10?... **How long?**... It has all come to a head!... **the Doomsday clock is down to a second!**... and everything is spot on God's schedule!... *everything is working out on His plan... and we're all going to die on time!*

It all happens when the seventh trumpet sounds... when the trumpet sounds.... A period of time will take place which includes the seven bowls of judgement... all are ***the final*** judgements on the earth... the time of the end has come.... finished!

One prayer the church has been praying for 2000 years... a prayer that was partly answered the day Jesus taught it to the disciples... He gave them their daily bread... He's been giving bread ever since... He forgave them of their sins... He still does... He helped them get through

temptation... He delivered them from the evil one...He still does... but as that doomsday clock ticks down the seconds... the prayer **will be** fulfilled... **Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...**

16:17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the sanctuary from the throne, saying, "It is done."

Read verse 7

What's going on?... **the mystery of God is finished?**... what's a mystery?...here it is not a "who dunit?"... in the Bible... and this is important... **a mystery is truth that God has hidden but will reveal in His time...**

A great doxology in the book of Romans 16:25-26

Now to Him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the Gentiles, leading to obedience of faith;

I counted 27 mysteries in the Old Testament that Jesus revealed in the New Testament...

- The mysteries of the kingdom
- The mystery of Israel's blindness to the Messiah
- The mystery of the rapture
- The mystery of Christ
- The mystery of salvation
- The mystery of the incarnation
- The mystery of God's will

On and on... There is not a person in this room that reads this book that does not recognize there are many, many mysteries in it... we don't really like that!... We want to know everything...this has been going on since the first two people on earth who could not resist eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil....

So we speculate and come up with answers to God's mysteries we should have left as mystery... As a result... there has been much division in the "church"...many denominations formed as a result... theological battles...**God reveals to us what He wants.**

I think this is referring here to all the big questions the world has been asking about God through the ages..... *Why have you allowed Satan to do what he has done on this earth?.... why have You allowed evil to have such a grasp on this world?...* Job asks *Why do the righteous suffer?*

I think this verse is telling us that finally we will have resolution to the mysteries...to all of those troubling questions that nag our minds... **What has been hidden from us... will be mystery no more.**

5. God's practical application

Good sermons always give a practical application on the passage being preached... God does that for us in chapter 10... for the last 4 verses have a clear relevance for every generation of believers...they present an amazing picture.

We've seen that the mysteries of God will be revealed... we've been informed of the imminent conclusion of this world...all is concluding just as God has planned... He is in complete control....now this little scroll takes center stage...

God's word has authority with its promises and prophecies certain to be fulfilled... but it is no value to us personally if we don't take it in... read it...feed on it... then proclaim it....that voice from heaven speaks again... certainly the voice of God:

8 Then the voice I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, "Go take the scroll which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and the earth... So I went to the angel telling him to give me the little scroll..."

Can you imagine going up to an angel... no.... a "strong angel" and say "*Give me that book!*"...gutsy!...notice the scroll is "open"... it's open for all to see... our Bible is open... for all to see...

So the angel says...*you want the book?*...**9 Take it and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey....can't I just read it?... eat it?**...is this the strangest thing you've ever heard... no... if you've read the Old Testament... specifically Ezekiel 2:9-3:3

This helps us understand this..... God sends Ezekiel to the rebellious Son's of Israel... a "**stiff necked people**"...to preach God's Word... specifically God's word of "**lamentations, sighing and woe**"...judgements that will come upon them if they do not repent....

Then I looked, and behold, a hand was sent forth to me; and behold, a scroll was in it. 10 Then He spread it out before me, and it was written on the front and back, and written on it were lamentations, sighing, and woe. Then He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel."2 So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll. 3 And He said to me, "Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you." Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth.

Eating the scroll...the book...is the picture of taking God's Word in...consuming it...absorbing it... tasting it for the immense flavor it has...There is sweetness in God's word... and there is bitterness...John takes the book

Read verse 10

God's Word is sweet... God's Word is like honey in your mouth... Psalm 119:103 **103 How sweet is Your word to my taste! Sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

The Gospel of Jesus Christ...the hope for all mankind... the salvation offered in this book... is so very sweet.... Eternal life with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ... sweeter than honey... Have you...when you are "out of sorts"... your days haven't been going well... you're stressed... you're frazzled... and you sit down and open God's word....

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

So sweet... your mind melts.

John sees the hope that is set out before him... He sees the purpose in all the tribulation... that there is a purpose in all of it...there is victory over death, evil, sin for the believer!.. there is a perfect kingdom on the horizon...so sweet....but yet...there is a bitterness in his stomach!

While there is hope for the follower of Christ... many, many will reject Him... many, many will go through the judgements ending in eternal judgement... family members... friends... people you work with... people you have respected through your life who rejected the gospel of Jesus Christ.... People you were too scared or embarrassed to present the gospel to.

And immediate for John... to see the thousands and thousands of Christians martyred for their faith... the results of following God's word in a hostile world.... Leaves a bitter feeling in the stomach...

The apostle Paul had this sick bitterness in his stomach as he lamented for his kinsmen God's chosen people... Israel without Christ... Romans 9:1

I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh,

What is John to do?

Read verse 11

Preach the Word John!.....Preach the Word!

Share to a lost world the sweetness of the gospel AND the bitterness of a coming judgement being without Christ.... PREACH IT ALL JOHN!...the sweet the bitter.

Spurgeon was talking to some prospective preachers... he said *“when you are talking about the sweetness of God’s Word...you need to let it be reflected upon your face!... You need to have a radiant face as you prescribe the mercy, the love of God...just let your face be radiant!*

And when you talk about the judgements of God...the bitter...then your everyday face will do!

All of Revelation presents to us an urgency to:

1. Embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ
2. preach the word to a lost world...

To share Christ with the world you live in... the Doomsday clock has just a few seconds left... but this chapter 10 gives us one last respite before it is all done.... Increasing the urgency.

Time is very short... Satan wants you to think you’ve got all the time in the world... an interesting quote:

“The Devil’s most effective lie is NOT that there is no God, or that there is no biblical truth. The most effectual lie is that there is no hurry!”