

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

This evening we are continuing our study through the book of Revelation –

Two weeks ago we left off looking at two of the final trumpets

We looked at the demon possessed locusts that are going to bring upon five months of suffering on those that are living during this time and we also looked at this massive army that is going to be given the power to wipe out 1/3 of mankind during this time.

We are going to get to final trumpet this evening – but not before there is a pause in the action as John describes for us a few events that will occur at this time.

Let's pray...

[Rev 10:1-11 NKJV] 1 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. 2 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**, 3 and cried with a loud voice, as [when] a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices.

So chapter 10 begins with John describing an angel – remember, John is up in heaven as all this is going on – so he describes a mighty angel as it makes its way from heaven to earth.

The question becomes – who is this angel???

Because if you pick a commentary, you will find many people will point out that this is Jesus Christ –

And the reason that they come to that conclusion is because the description here is a little similar to the description that John gave us of Jesus back in chapter one -

I don't think it is Jesus and I have a few reasons as to why –

- The first reason is that John had already described seeing Jesus twice in Revelation. In chapter 1 and also when he was transported to heaven in chapter five (when he sees the Lamb taking the scroll) – but here it appears that he doesn't know the identity of the angel here in chapter 10
- Another reason I don't believe that this is Jesus Christ is because John refers to this angel as “another mighty angel” – The Greek word for another means – another of the same kind – and it refers back to the strong angel in chapter 5:2 that was crying out who is worthy to open the scrolls and to loose its seals” – someone might say – well don't we find Jesus referred to as an angel of the Lord in

the Old Testament – over and over again – Yes – but, Jesus is never referred to as an angel in the New Testament.

- There is another reason that I am going to reveal later on in the chapter as to why this is not Jesus.
- I believe that this angel is Michael – because if you go back and read Daniel 12, you find a similar description of him there.

John also describes this angel as having a little book – those who say that this is Jesus will say that this is the same scroll that had the seven seals – from chapter 5.

However, the Greek word that John uses for the scroll in chapter five and the little book here are not the same.

While we have already seen Jesus open up some of the seals on the scroll – this book is never opened up because, as we will see – John is going to have it for dinner.

I also had you make a note of where it states, **and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth**, this is the concept of conquest or complete authority over – and it is something that is repeated over and over again in the Old Testament – especially as the Children of Israel were making their way from Egypt toward the Promised Land.

[Deu 11:24 NKJV] 24 "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the River Euphrates, even to the Western Sea, shall be your territory.

So this angel will be given authority by God over the things of the earth during this time.

Also notice that when the angel cries out – seven thunders uttered their voices –

It doesn't say it simply thundered seven times –

God spoke through the thunders –

Turn with me to John 12

[Jhn 12:27-29 NKJV] 27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, [saying], "I have both glorified [it] and will glorify [it] again." 29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard [it] **said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him."**

The idea is that God spoke with seven thunders and each thunder had its own message.

4 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."

So John hears the voice from within the thunder and he can clearly understand the message and he is about to write it down and then he is commanded – not to write it down.

This is the only thing in the book of Revelation that was to be "sealed". Everything else was written down, to be understood.

Some people may write books about what was in the little book – but those are all speculations.

So then the question becomes why did John hear the message in the first place if he wasn't supposed to write it down???

And I believe that is the point here -

We need to understand there are aspects of the end times we don't know about.

The lesson for us is this:

While God's Word tells us everything we NEED to know, it doesn't tell us everything.

Some things remain hidden from us & require we walk in the Spirit, trusting in God to give us daily guidance.

5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven 6 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**, 7 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.

Here in verse 6, we have the final reason why I believe that the angel here is not Jesus –

Because the angel swears an oath unto Jesus -

[Col 1:16 NKJV] 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

What did the angel swear?

That there should be delay no longer –

Back in chapter 6 – we saw the martyrs, under the altar in heaven – those that accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior during the Tribulation Period and then killed for rebelling against the antichrist.

And they cried out “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

They were told to wait until their number is filled.

That time is now reached.

Because once the last trumpet sounds - it seems all those who are going to come to faith during the Tribulation have done so.

All that's left now are hardcore rebels in league with the antichrist.

And the fullness of God's wrath will be poured out in the Seven Bowls.

I also had you make a note – where John writes about the mystery of God will be finished –

What is the great mystery -

The great mystery was how God would use a Jewish Messiah to bring salvation to Gentiles and to the entire world.

Even the Old Testament prophets foretold & affirmed that salvation is not confined to God's covenant with Israel.

It's not a matter of works or keeping the Law.

It comes by faith in Jesus and is open to all who repent of sin and believe.

The mystery of God is the Gospel of Grace Realized in the Person & Work of Jesus Christ.

8 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." 9 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." 10 Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. 11 And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

Turn to Ezekiel 3 -

[Eze 3:1-4 NKJV] 1 Moreover 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 caused me to eat that scroll. 3 And He said to me, "Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you." So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness. 4 Then He said to me: "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them."

Ezekiel was told to eat a scroll, then go and preach to Israel.

Ezekiel was to first partake of God's Word, to take it in and apply it to himself first.

Then he was to go & share it.

It's the same idea here with John – notice that God isn't forcing him to eat it – he has to take it.

Now, how is it sweet and bitter at the same time?

It is sweet for those who respond to God's grace and mercy and will spend eternity living in new bodies and in the presence of Jesus - yet at the same time, it is going to be bitter knowing that the unbelieving world is going to be judged.

As a pastor – it is my responsibility to make sure to teach the sweet along with the bitter portions of God's word.

And if I only give you the sweet or only the bitter – then I am not fulfilling my responsibilities as a pastor / teacher.

[Rev 11:1-19 NKJV] 1 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. 2 "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot [for] forty-two months.

The temple of God that is mentioned here at the start of chapter 11 – is the third temple in Jerusalem that has yet to be built.

Not only does the book of Revelation state that there will be a third temple – the book of Daniel tells us as well.

This is where the Antichrist is going to do something so horrible at the 3.5 year mark of the Tribulation that it is going to cause Jews to flee Jerusalem.

This is when the Antichrist reveals himself as the evil person he is and declares himself to be god.

So for 42 months (3.5 years) – gentiles are going to take over Jerusalem and do what they want.

3 "And **I will give [power]** to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy **one thousand two hundred and sixty days**, clothed in sackcloth." 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. 5 And if anyone wants to harm them, **fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies**. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.

God is going to equip – two witnesses that preach and prophesy for three and a half years (most likely the first 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation)

Not only is God going to equip – He is going to protect them.

The world is going to want to harm them – and God will not allow anything to happen to them until He allows the Antichrist to kill them at the end of the 3.5 years.

And this fire that proceeds from their mouth is most likely in reference where God is going to give them the gift of calling fire down from heaven upon those who want to hurt them – just like we saw Elijah do on Sunday study.

6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy;

Here is another reference to Elijah – Elijah pronounced drought in Israel

[1Ki 17:1 NKJV] 1 And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "[As] the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word."

By the way – do you know how long was the drought that Elijah pronounced on Israel??? 3.5 years

Let's continue in verse 6

and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire. (Here is a reference that reminds us of Moses)

So these two witnesses will do the miracles that were unique to Moses and Elijah.

And that is why many believe that they are Moses and Elijah

In fact Malachi tells us that Elijah will one day return:

(Mal 4:5 NKJV) Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

They have already appeared together when they appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.

They are often talked about together as symbolic of the Old Testament, representing the “Law and the Prophets”.

So Elijah and Moses seem to be the most likely – some people think that it might be Elijah and Enoch because both of them didn’t die.

7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.

Back in Rev 9, we saw the demon possessed locust come out of the abyss –

Out of the same abyss, comes the Antichrist

And later on we will see that he gets his power from satan.

And God allows Satan to kill his two witnesses.

I find comfort in the fact that God has in control of when I die. He will not allow me to die “before my time”, but when my job on earth is done, that’s when I go home.

(Is 54:17 NKJV) No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me,” Says the LORD.

There is a sense in which I do not need to fear that I am going to be hit by some out of control truck, or that some burglar is going to sneak into my house and murder me in my sleep, unless it is simply my time to go.

God is in control.

Church, life is all about finishing the work that God has given you. Finish well.

When you're done with work, you head for home.

But if you're still here, you must have things that God wants you to finish.

8 And their dead bodies [will lie] in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. 9 Then [those] from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. 10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

So for 3.5 days, the bodies of these two witnesses will lie in the streets of Jerusalem – notice that John doesn't address it was Jerusalem –

Because the people have gone back to the "Old life" of being in bondage in Egypt as in the days before God delivered them.

And Sodom of course was the place of sin.

So people around the world party because the two witnesses are dead.

11 Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. 12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. 13 In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.

God breathes new life in the two witnesses and calls them up to heaven and they ascended to heaven in a cloud.

Now, imagine the people seeing this around the world –

They see their bodies lying in the streets for 3.5 days, there are parties happening everywhere and then the two witnesses get up and ascend into heaven.

And following all this a great earthquake happens and 7000 people die.

The rest that is spoken of here at the end of verse 13 are the remnant in Jerusalem that still believed in God.

14 The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

The second woe is the 6th trumpet blast – it has come to an end – now only the seventh trumpet remains.

15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become [the kingdoms] of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" 16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.

A few weeks ago, when we saw the seventh seal opened, there was silence for half an hour-

As soon as the seventh trumpet sounds – there is anticipation, worship and giving thanks that God's kingdom is about to be established.

18 The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."

In verse 18, God responds to the wrath of the nations with four things that have “come”

1. God's wrath

The nations expressed “wrath” (same Greek word), and God returns the favor.

The Tribulation period is the time of God’s “wrath”. He will be giving the earth what it deserves.

He will be making things right.

2. Judging the dead

No one will escape God’s judgment.

Everyone will one day stand before God – more when we get to Rev. 20.

3. Rewards

While some will be judged with eternal punishment, there will be others who will receive rewards for what they’ve done with their lives.

19 Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.

When we studied the book of Exodus – we learned about the Ark of the Covenant – this was the box in the Most Holy place in the Tabernacle that had the Mercy Seat – that would be God’s throne room on earth.

It contained the 10 Commandments, which were God’s “contract” or “covenant” with His people

The Ark of the Covenant went missing during the days of Jeremiah – when Babylon destroyed the first temple.

And no one has seen the Ark for 2500 years.

However, the Ark of the Covenant was a just copy of the real thing.

Because the real Ark – is His throne room.

And just like the Children of Israel saw God's presence on Mt Sinai with the earthquakes and the thunder – every believer will experience His presence forever and ever as He sits on His throne.

Amen.

Let's pray...

