

45. The Book of Revelation—10:5-11

A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
(6-16-21)

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As we said last time, Chapters 10-14 form a break in the narrative or a *parenthesis*.

These Chapters serve to fill in some of the blanks and amplify some of the things that have *already* taken place.

In that regard they are a *'flashback'* of events that have taken place primarily during the first half of the Tribulation Period that were not included in the narrative of the preceding Chapters.

Revelation 10:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven

⁶and 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,

As I said last time, I don't believe this mighty angel is Jesus—but not because he swears by God Almighty (as some use this as proof this angel couldn't be Jesus).

Since God can swear by no one greater—He swears by Himself:

Jeremiah 44:26 (NKJV)

²⁶Therefore hear the word of the Lord, all Judah who dwell in the land of Egypt: 'Behold, I have sworn by My great name,' says the Lord..."

Hebrews 6:13 (NKJV)

¹³ For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,

Revelation 10:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵The 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.**

In a solemn act, the angel whom John saw standing on the sea and on the land (verse 2) lifted up his hand (some translations say 'right hand' placing the 'little book' in his left hand) to heaven (which becomes the standard gesture for taking a vow)—and swore (took a solemn oath) before God Almighty that he would not delay in completing his mission.

As we have been saying, God has been delaying His full and final judgments so that lost sinners will have time to repent (2 Peter 3:1–9).

Now, however, all who would receive Jesus and be saved, have done so which means—there aren't any more reasons to delay future judgments upon the earth any longer.

So, He will now *accelerate* His judgments from here until the end of the Tribulation Period when Jesus returns and completes the judgment of God as recorded in Chapter 19.

The specific content of the angel's oath was that **"there will be delay no longer"**—answering the question of the martyrs in Chapter 6—

Revelation 6:9-10 (NKJV)

⁹ When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Revelation 10:7 (NKJV)

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.**

The phrase **"but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound"**— indicates that the judgment of the seventh trumpet is about to come—and that it is not a single event but covers days.

This period includes the 7-Bowl Judgments (Revelation 16:1–21), which would appear to require some days—possibly several weeks to unfold.

As we will see when we get to Chapter 16—they are poured out in 'rapid-fire' succession on the earth and those who 'dwell' upon it as the culmination of the final judgments of the Great Tribulation period.

The time of God's patience is now ended—the time for the final acts of His divine judgments are at hand—even as Peter warned:

2 Peter 3:9-10 (NLT2)

⁹ The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise [to bring a worldwide judgment], as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment.

One author comments concerning this—

"A question that has troubled God's people throughout history is why God has allowed evil in the world. The wicked often appear to prosper. Sin seemingly runs wild and unchecked. Why, people ask, does God not stop all the carnage, corruption, and chaos in the world? Why does He allow His children to suffer? When will divine justice prevail and the righteous be delivered and the wicked punished?"

This was something the Psalmist wrestled with in Psalm 73—

Psalm 73:1-20 (NLT2)

¹ Truly God is good to Israel, to those whose hearts are pure. ² But as for me, I almost lost my footing. My feet were slipping, and I was almost gone. ³ For I envied the proud when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness. ⁴ They seem to live such painless lives; their bodies are so healthy and strong. ⁵ They don't have

troubles like other people; they're not plagued with problems like everyone else...

¹² Look at these wicked people— enjoying a life of ease while their riches multiply. ¹³ Did I keep my heart pure for nothing? Did I keep myself innocent for no reason? ¹⁴ I get nothing but trouble all day long; every morning brings me pain...

¹⁶ So I tried to understand why the wicked prosper. But what a difficult task it is! ¹⁷ Then I went into your sanctuary, O God, and I finally understood the destiny of the wicked. ¹⁸ Truly, you put them on a slippery path and send them sliding over the cliff to destruction. ¹⁹ In an instant they are destroyed, completely swept away by terrors [of judgment]...

Folks, the time has finally come for God to bring His final judgments upon the wicked in full force.

The time anticipated in the disciples' questions recorded in Matthew 24:3 and Acts 1:6 has come—

"Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"
(Matthew 24:3); *"Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"* (Acts 1:6)

"...but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished" (verse 7)

One author rightly points out concerning what a biblical mystery is—

"In Biblical vocabulary, a mystery isn't something no one knows. A mystery is something no one could know unless it was revealed [by God] to him. If you could know it by intuition or personal investigation, it isn't a [divine] mystery, because mysteries must be revealed."

Mysteries hidden in the past (Old Testament) that the New Testament reveals include—the *"mystery of Israel's blindness"* (Romans 11:25); the *"mystery of the Rapture"* (1 Corinthians 15:51); the *"mystery form of the Kingdom"* (Matthew 13)—and there are others.

I believe that the **"mystery of God"** which the angel spoke of is the same mystery Paul talked about in Ephesians—

Ephesians 1:9-10 (NLT2)

⁹ God has now revealed to us his mysterious plan regarding Christ, a plan to fulfill his own good pleasure. ¹⁰ And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth.

This is the *consummation* of God's plan in bringing His glorious Kingdom in Christ to fulfillment.

This consummation involves *gathering* all who have received Jesus as their Savior and King throughout human history into His glorious Kingdom and all that goes with it.

But it also includes the *judgment* of all rebels (men and demons) into the Lake of Fire (hell) for all eternity (Revelation 20:11-15).

The **mystery** spoken of in verse 7 refers to all the unknown details that are revealed from this point to the end of Revelation when the New Heavens and New Earth are created.

God had preached *that mystery* (without all the details revealed in the New Testament) to His servants the *prophets* in the Old Testament—prophets like Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Amos, and Zechariah—who all wrote of end-time events.

Much of the detail, however, was hidden and not revealed until the New Testament (for example in Matthew 24, 25, and 2 Thessalonians 1:5–2:12)—and more particularly in the previous Chapters of Revelation.

Warren Wiersbe—

"The "mystery of God" has to do with the age-old problem of evil in the world. Why is there both moral and natural evil in the world? Why doesn't God do something about it? Of course, the Christian knows that God did "do something about it" at Calvary when Jesus Christ was made sin and experienced divine wrath for a sinful world.

We also know that God is permitting evil to increase until the world is ripe for judgment (2 Thessalonians 2:7; Revelation 14:14–20). Since God has already paid the price for sin, He is free to delay His judgment, and He cannot be accused of injustice or unconcern."

Revelation 10:8-10 (NKJV)

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.

That language is reminiscent of several other Old Testament passages—

Jeremiah 15:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart...

Ezekiel 2:8-10 (NKJV)

⁸But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house [northern Kingdom of Israel]; open your mouth and eat what I give you." ⁹Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. ¹⁰Then He spread it before me; and *there was* writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it *were* lamentations and mourning and woe.

Ezekiel 3:1-3 (NKJV)

¹Moreover 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.

Revelation 10:10 (NKJV)

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.**

God's Word is both 'sweet' and 'bitter.'

God's Word is sweet as we taste His promises and His glorious Kingdom which is coming—and yet, as we really begin to *digest* all that God has said we become 'sick to our stomachs.'

We become 'sick to our stomachs' to realize what is coming upon the earth—all of the pain and suffering stemming from God's judgment upon this world for its sin and rebellion against Him.

It was only *after* Ezekiel "ate the scroll" that was sweet to his mouth but bitter to his belly that he was able to share boldly with those of whom he had previously been afraid (Ezekiel 3:3, 14).

The bitterness in his belly motivated Ezekiel to share God's truth.

The same seems to be the case with John—

Revelation 10:10-11 (NKJV)

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."**

And through the remaining revelation that the Lord gave to John—he did indeed prophesy to many peoples, nations, tongues and kings.

And John continues to do so as each new generation is introduced to the prophecies of the Book of Revelation—especially the generation of the Tribulation Saints.

The greatest strength and boldness in telling others about Jesus—is knowing the judgment that is coming upon this world and the terror that God is going to unleash upon rebellious, fallen mankind.

If we really have God's heart, we will not want to see people go through that judgment—not even our worst enemies!

This becomes the greatest motivation to share the gospel—

2 Corinthians 5:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...

The root of that motivation is God's love for the lost!

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

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