

Revelation Chapter 10 Handout

We come to another reprieve from the destruction. This is the continuing pattern of Revelation. Just as things are heating up, the reader is given a moment to reflect on God's continuing presence, power and mystery. We also have an interesting move... John is about to write down more information, when he is told not to do so. However the reprieve is only for a moment and John once again has to speak of the future. In the end however the promise is made that God will fulfill God's promises and all will be made clear.

1. And I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. 2 He held a little scroll open in his hand. Setting his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 he gave a great shout, like a lion roaring. And when he shouted, the seven thunders sounded. 4 And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down."

Mighty angel: *God is sending his best and brightest (literally) to take care of his business. This implies that what the angel carries is of great importance. No one is to miss what God is doing.*

Little scroll: *a nice contrast to the mighty angel. What appears to be insignificant may turn out to be something very important.*

Right foot... left foot: *he is striding like the Colossus of Rhodes across all that God has made (land and sea) so he is as great as one of the wonders of the world.*

Great shout: *this is symbolic of the importance of what is being proclaimed. Everyone is to know that God has something important to offer.*

Seven thunders: *this is the next of the sevens. However this one will remain secret... no one will know what they were to bring.*

Do not write it down: *God is keeping some things under wraps. We will never know all until God brings all things to a conclusion.*

5 Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and the land raised his right hand to heaven 6 and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it: "There will be no more delay, 7 but in the days when the seventh angel is to blow his trumpet, the mystery of God will be fulfilled, as he announced to his servants the prophets."

Right hand to heaven and swore: *this is similar to a Jewish oath swearing ceremony*

By him who lives forever and ever: *we are reminded at this point that the one causing the future to unfold is none other than the creator of all that there is... the one who is mightier than any Cesar.*

There will be no more delay: the end is approaching... which means that there is not much more time to wait. So we better gird up our loins because things are going to get worse before they get better.

Mystery of God will be fulfilled: the prophets have laid out God's plan and now all will be made plain.

8 Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." 9 So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll; and he said to me, "Take it, and eat; it will be bitter to your stomach, but sweet as honey in your mouth."

Take the scroll: we return again to that small scroll that seemed to insignificant

Take and eat it: this carries the idea of ingesting the information that the scroll contains. This is a prophetic act where the metaphor is acted out.

Bitter to the stomach... honey in the mouth: at first God's judgment on the world will seem sweet... we get revenge...but then it will turn sour because John will see the destruction that comes.

10 So I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it; it was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter. 11 Then they said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples and nations and languages and kings."

You must prophecy: the act of eating has warned him, prepared him, to proclaim the coming judgment... he has already tasted its bitterness.