

THE ANGEL AND THE LITTLE BOOK

Introduction

1. The sounding of the first four trumpets brought calamities upon the world that served as warnings of greater judgment to come if men would not repent.
2. The sounding of the fifth trumpet showed the suffering brought about as a consequence of sin – another warning of man's need to repent.
3. The sounding of the sixth trumpet revealed God's army coming in a partial judgment upon those who refused to repent.
4. Before the sounding of the last trumpet, John was presented with a vision to bring a challenge to the faithful.

I. The Mighty Angel

(10:1-2)

- A. John saw another angel – different from the others previously mentioned – descending from heaven.
 1. It should be emphasized that this is an angel, similar to the strong angel mentioned in 5:2 and 18:21.
 2. This is not a reference to Jesus, though there are similarities in their descriptions.
- B. This angel was clothed with a cloud, indicating that he was sent with the authority, power, and judgment of God (cf. 1:7; Luke 21:27).
- C. This angel had a rainbow upon its head, symbolizing a connection to the faithfulness of God's promises (cf. 4:3).
- D. The angel's face shined with a brightness like the sun, showing a relationship to the truth of God's Word (cf. 1:16).
- E. Finally, this angel's feet were like pillars of fire, again showing a connection to the judgment of God (cf. 1:15).
- F. In his hand, the angel held a little book that was opened.
 1. The Greek word indicates a "booklet."
 2. This is different from the book or scroll seen earlier (Ch. 5).
 3. This book was already opened, symbolizing that its message was to be known and understood.
- G. The angel stood with his right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the land.
 1. This symbolizes the "far-reaching inclusiveness of his mission."
 2. His mission was worldwide in scope – for all humanity – for "sea and earth connotes the totality of terrestrial things" (Robertson).

II. The Seven Thunders

(10:3-4)

- A. John heard the angel cry out with a loud voice, compared to the power of a lion's roar – able to be heard from a great distance.
- B. When the angel cried, "seven thunders uttered their voices."
 1. The thunder symbolizes both the power and dread of their message (cf. Psalm 29).
 2. Clearly, it was a message of judgment against the enemies of God
- C. John was forbidden to write what the voices had said.
 1. This does not mean that the judgment was canceled.
 2. It indicates that man does not know all the ways or works of God.

The Book of Revelation

Lesson Nineteen

Revelation 10:1-11

- III. The Angel's Oath (10:5-7)
- A. The vision of the angel continued with him raising his hand to Heaven.
 - 1. The ASV and ESV both indicate that this was his right hand.
 - 2. This action was taken by one who was to swear a solemn oath, calling God as witness.
 - B. The angel swore an oath by the eternal nature and power of God!
 - C. His oath is that there should be time no longer.
 - 1. Some interpret this to mean that this is the end of time and that the sounding of the 7th trumpet reveals the end of the world.
 - 2. However, the word for "time" can also mean "delay."
 - a. ASV – "that there shall be delay no longer"
 - b. ESV – "that there would be no more delay"
 - 3. In this case, the sounding of the 7th trumpet would reveal the completion of God's purpose for the church in relation to the world.
 - 4. In fact, the third woe is introduced as "coming quickly" – that is, "without delay" (11:14).
 - D. What would come without delay when the 7th trumpet sounded? The completion of the mystery of God.
 - 1. This mystery was God's plan for man's salvation (cf. Eph. 1:9-11; 3:3-11).
 - 2. It involved the revelation of the Gospel (cf. Rom. 16:25-26; 1 Cor. 2:6-13).
 - 3. It involved the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles (cf. Col. 1:26-27; 2:2; 1 Tim. 3:16).
 - 4. It involved the permanent establishment of the church, which was questioned due to the severe persecution by Rome.
 - E. Thus, God would soon make it clear that His kingdom was here to stay and would never be destroyed.
- IV. The Little Book (10:8-11)
- A. John was told to take the little book from the angel, and then he was told to eat it.
 - B. He was told that it would taste as sweet as honey, but it would make his stomach bitter.
 - 1. The imagery comes from Ezekiel 2:8 – 3:3, emphasizing the need to consume and digest the Word of God.
 - 2. As Ezekiel ate the scroll, it tasted as sweet as honey; but, when he carried out the message of the scroll, it brought bitterness (3:14).
 - 3. So it is with the Word of God – it is both sweet and bitter.
 - C. Though John was privileged to reveal the sweetness of salvation and the glories of Heaven, he was also charged to preach to the world the bitterness of judgment and the horrors of Hell.
 - D. There is more prophecy to come, and John is to declare it accurately – many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings are to be judged.
 - E. "It was sweet to learn that God's cause would be victorious in His saints, but it was bitter to prophesy of their suffering and of the destructive judgments which would befall the wicked world" (Homer Hailey).