

The Book of Revelation

By

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CHAPTER TEN

THE OPEN BOOK

"And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." (vs. 1).

This is "**another angel**." Not one of the seven nor one of the bound, but the description seems to bring us back to chapter one. In the Old Testament, CHRIST is called "**The angel of the Lord**," so here, He is the mighty angel with the description of deity. In chapter eleven, verse three, He calls them "**My witnesses**," making it clear that this is none other than CHRIST Himself.

CHRIST has now opened the seals and has brought fierce judgments upon Satan's followers. His people have been persecuted and killed. Now as Heaven opens and He Himself comes forth we might expect mercy to be a thing of the past, but the rainbow about his head still speaks of mercy.

Taking Possession

"And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth" (vs. 2).

Redemption proceeds on legal ground. To take possession there must be a warrant. CHRIST now descends with title deed to assert His rights and purposes and to enforce His rights on land and sea.

"Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours" (Deuteronomy 11:24). To place the foot on anything means to take possession. So here, CHRIST comes with open title deed and declares His rights to take the earth.

As a Lion

"And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth" (vs. 3). As a Lamb He was worthy to take the book; as a Lion He has power to enforce His purpose. It is a shout of victory. A lion has cat's paws and walks softly until his prey is within reach. Then a mighty roar freezes the prey into dead stillness as the lion springs upon it. **"The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about,**

seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8). But when the lion of Judah roars, the other lion may well tremble with mighty fear.

"Seven thunders uttered their voices" (vs. 3). John has been told to write, so he proceeds to do so until ordered to **"Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not"** (vs. 4).

No More Delay

"And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever... that there should be time no longer" (vs. 5, 6).

For ages men have been looking and longing for the Lord to come, but still He tarries. Some say, **"My Lord delayeth his coming"** and begin to smite their fellowservants (Matthew 24:48). Others drop into a state of apathy and cry, **"Where is the promise of his coming"** (II Peter 3:4).

There has been hope and delay, hope and disappointment; hope and still more delay, but still the Lord tarries. But GOD is not slack concerning His promises; He remembers them every one. Rather is He longsuffering, not willing that any should perish. I am glad He did not come ten years ago, or even five; for these years have given me opportunity to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

But now comes one of the most solemn proclamations on record. CHRIST, whose mercy has extended to giving His own life; He who has so long waited and delayed His coming that others might be saved; He now utters a decree of finality - Delay shall be no longer.

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets" (vs. 7).

The days of the seventh trumpet are like the days of Noah or the days of Abraham; they cover a period of time. They will include the seven vials. During these days prophecy will be fulfilled. The old prophets did not prophesy of eternal things. The seventh is the last and third woe trumpet. When it sounds, the final events take place. For sometime the conflict between CHRIST and Satan has been growing more fierce. It is evident there must be a showdown. The final struggle will come in chapter 19, but there are many angles to end-time events.

We might read a history of the civil war. The author might take a chapter to describe the political conditions in the north and relate some of the doings of Abraham Lincoln. The next chapter might give us a view of slavery and the condition of the Negroes in the south. Another chapter might deal with General Lee and another with General Grant.

So here, in chapter ten CHRIST declares possession; in chapter eleven He takes a plot of ground in Jerusalem and keeps it by supernatural power and also sends two witnesses to testify to Himself. In chapter twelve we are given the Jewish situation; in chapter thirteen we have a view of the political situation of the times.

Chapter fourteen gives us warnings, proclamations, and foreviews. Chapter fifteen and sixteen bring the terrible vial judgments. Seventeen is the religious situation and eighteen gives the commercial angle. Now everything is set for the final showdown which is given in chapter nineteen. Chapter twenty clears off the rubbish of our age and chapters twenty-one and twenty-two begin with all things new.

The Open Deed

"And the voice which I heard from Heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel" (vs. 8).

This open title deed is the result of CHRIST's redemptive work. For centuries it has been in the Father's hand. Men of all ages have tried to redeem men from the curse of sin, but none can even approach to it. All having failed, the Lamb steps forward and amidst the acclamation of all created beings He takes the book; breaks the seals and with it still in His hand He comes to take possession of the earth in the name of the Lord.

"And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey" (vs. 9).

This book represents CHRIST's redemptive work. All of CHRIST's work in redemption has been to procure this title deed; open it and give the benefits to His people, that they may take them; feed upon them; appropriate them; live by them; preach and teach them and build themselves up in the most holy faith.

GOD told Ezekiel to "eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel" (Ezekiel 3:1).

To **"eat"** the word is to study it, digest it and receive it into our very life. To make it the subject of all our hopes and prayer and living. When we thus receive and appropriate the title to our inheritance, we are to pass it on. John was to **"prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings"** (vs. 11).

It was sweet as honey in John's mouth. As he first glanced over it and saw the happy ending and the glorious promises, it was sweet and brought joy to his heart, but, as he began to study it more carefully and digest the message he saw the terrible wrath and sorrow that must come before that glad day, and it was bitterness to his soul.

GOD's Word is always sweet to the earnest soul but it costs bitterness to be a full souled believer.

~ end of chapter 10 ~

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