

Introduction to Revelation Chapter 10

Revelation chapter 10 introduces another significant interlude in the unfolding of the trumpet judgments. After the terrifying events of the sixth trumpet in chapter 9, the narrative pauses before the sounding of the seventh trumpet. This pause is not accidental; it serves to reveal additional divine perspective and to prepare both John and the reader for the next stage of God's prophetic plan.

In this chapter, John sees a mighty angel descending from heaven, clothed with a cloud, with a rainbow above his head, and his face shining like the sun. His legs appear like pillars of fire, symbolizing strength, authority, and divine commission. In his hand is a small scroll that has been opened, indicating that God's revelation is continuing to unfold. The angel's stance—one foot on the sea and the other on the land—demonstrates the universal scope of God's authority over the entire earth.

When the angel cries out, seven thunders respond with their own voices. However, John is commanded not to write down what the thunders say, reminding us that not every detail of God's plan is revealed to humanity. There are aspects of divine purpose that remain hidden within God's sovereign wisdom.

The angel then raises his hand and swears by the eternal Creator that there will be no more delay, declaring that the mystery of God will soon be fulfilled. This mystery refers to God's redemptive plan—long promised through the prophets—which will reach its completion as the final stages of judgment and restoration unfold.

John is then instructed to take the small scroll and eat it. The scroll is sweet in his mouth but bitter in his stomach. This powerful symbolism reflects the nature of prophetic truth: the Word of God is sweet because it reveals His purposes and promises, yet it is bitter because it contains the message of judgment and suffering that must be proclaimed.

Revelation chapter 10 emphasizes the authority of God over history, the certainty that His purposes will be fulfilled, and the responsibility of God's servants to faithfully proclaim His message. Even amid terrifying judgments, the chapter reminds readers that God's plan is deliberate, measured, and moving toward its ultimate completion.

Heavenly Father,

As we come to Revelation chapter 10, open our hearts to receive Your Word with humility and reverence. Help us understand that Your plans are perfect, even when they are beyond our full understanding.

Give us courage to receive the truth—both the sweetness of Your promises and the seriousness of Your warnings. Strengthen us to be faithful messengers of Your Word, willing to speak truth even when it is difficult.

Remind us that Your purposes will not be delayed and that Your mystery will be fulfilled exactly as You have declared.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Revelation 10:1–2

“(1) Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his feet were like fiery pillars. (2) He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land.”

The Context:

Just like between the 6th and 7th *Seals*, there is now a "pause" between the 6th and 7th *Trumpets*. This is an **intermission of grace**.

John sees an angel that is different from all the others. This "mighty angel" is so glorious that some people think it's Jesus Himself (though most scholars believe it is a high-ranking messenger, like Gabriel, acting with Jesus' authority). He isn't bringing a plague; he's bringing an **announcement**. He stands like a colossus over the entire planet, showing that what happens next is global.

The Meaning of the "Rainbow," "Fiery Pillars," and "The Little Scroll":

In simple American English, we might say, "A massive, glorious messenger from God arrived to claim the whole world for the King, holding a final set of instructions that were finally ready to be read."

John uses these symbols:

- **"Robed in a Cloud with a Rainbow"**: This signifies **Judgment mixed with Mercy**. Clouds represent God's power and judgment, but the rainbow is the universal sign of God's **Covenant** (His promise to Noah). It's a reminder that even when the world is falling apart, God is keeping His word. He hasn't forgotten His people.
- **"Right Foot on Sea, Left Foot on Land"**: This signifies **Total Ownership**. In the ancient world, putting your foot on something meant you owned it. By standing on both the water and the earth, the angel is saying, "The King is taking it all back." There is no corner of the planet—from the deepest ocean to the highest mountain—that doesn't belong to God.
- **"A Little Scroll, Open in His Hand"**: This signifies **Revealed Truth**. Back in Chapter 5, we saw a scroll that was sealed shut. Now, this scroll is **open**. It represents the final "chapter" of God's plan. It's "little" because the time is short. The "mystery of God" is about to be finished.

The Core Lesson:

God is the rightful owner of the Earth. We often act like politicians, CEOs, or "the markets" run the world. But the mighty angel shows us that they are just "squatters." This teaches us that **justice is coming because the Owner has arrived**. No matter how much "smoke" the Abyss releases, it cannot stop the Angel with the Rainbow from claiming the land and the sea.

The Illustration: The Title Deed

Imagine a beautiful house that has been taken over by a gang. They've spray-painted the walls, broken the windows, and they're telling everyone they own the place. The neighbors are terrified.

Then, a massive, powerful man walks onto the front lawn. He doesn't just stand on the grass; he stands on the porch and the sidewalk. He holds up a piece of paper—the **Title Deed**. He doesn't have to shout; his presence alone shows that the "squatters" are finished. He is the representative of the True Owner. The "Little Scroll" is that title deed. It's the proof that the King is coming to clean the house.

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Covenant" Check:** When I look at the chaos in the world, do I see the "Rainbow"? Do I remember that God is faithful even in the middle of a storm?
- **The "Authority" Check:** Do I live like God owns "the land and the sea" of my own life? Is there any "territory" in my heart I'm still treating like I'm the squatter?
- **The "Open" Check:** Am I ready for the "Little Scroll"? Am I staying hungry for the Truth that God has revealed in His Word?

Revelation 10:3–4

“(3) and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion. When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke. (4) And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, ‘Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down.’”

The Context:

This is one of the most mysterious moments in the entire Bible. The "Mighty Angel" lets out a roar, and in response, "Seven Thunders" speak. John, being a faithful reporter, grabs his pen to write it down.

But suddenly, God hits the "**Mute**" button.

John is told to keep this part of the vision a secret. This is a shock to the reader because Revelation is a book about "revealing" (that's what the word *Apocalypse* means). But here, God shows us that there are some things He knows that we aren't ready to hear yet.

The Meaning of the "Lion's Roar" and the "Seven Thunders":

In simple American English, we might say, "God's messenger gave a final warning, and the universe responded with a loud message, but God told John, 'This part isn't for the public yet.'" John uses these specific details:

- **"A Loud Shout like the Roar of a Lion":** This signifies **The Authority of the King**. Earlier, we saw Jesus as the "Lion of Judah." The angel is shouting with the voice of his Master. A lion's roar is a signal that the hunt is over and the king has arrived. It demands absolute attention.
- **"The Voices of the Seven Thunders":** This signifies **The Full Power of God's Word**. In the Bible, thunder is often called "the voice of God" (Psalm 29). The number "seven" means perfection or completeness. This was a perfect, powerful message from God Himself.
- **"Seal Up... Do Not Write It Down":** This signifies **Divine Mystery and Restraint**. Why would God hide it? Perhaps because it was too intense for us to handle, or perhaps because it was a "plan B" we didn't need to know. It proves that **God tells us what we need to know, not everything He could tell us**.

The Core Lesson:

We don't need to know the "Secrets" to trust the "Sovereign." We often get frustrated when God doesn't explain *why* things are happening or *what* is coming next. But Revelation 10 shows us that God has everything under control, even the parts He hasn't shared with us yet. This teaches us that **faith is trusting God with the "Sealed" parts of our lives**. We can be okay with the "Silence" because we know the "Shout" was from the King.

The Illustration: The Secret Birthday Gift

Imagine a child whose birthday is coming up. The parents have a massive, wonderful surprise planned. They are talking about it in the other room, and the child hears the excitement and the "thunder" of the boxes being moved around.

The child runs in with a notebook, wanting to write down exactly what the gift is. But the Father puts His hand on the notebook and says, "Not yet. I want you to know that the gift is coming, and I want you to hear how big it is, but I want the actual details to be a surprise." The child doesn't need to know the "detail" to know that the "Father" is doing something good.

The Seven Thunders are God's "Secret Gift" of justice—we hear the noise, but we have to wait for the reveal.

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Secret" Check:** Can I be at peace with the things I *don't* understand about my life right now, knowing that God has "sealed" them for a reason?
- **The "Roar" Check:** When I hear the "lion's roar" in the world (big, shaking events), do I recognize it as a signal that the King is active?
- **The "Trust" Check:** Am I more focused on trying to "figure out" God's secrets, or on "obeying" what He has already clearly written in the "Open Scroll" (the Bible)?

The secrets are sealed, but the Angel is about to make a massive oath.

Revelation 10:5–7

“(5) Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. (6) And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, ‘There will be no more delay! (7) But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.’”

The Context:

This is the "No Turning Back" moment. In the ancient world, raising your right hand was the universal sign of taking a **solemn oath**. The angel isn't just making a prediction; he is swearing an official decree by the authority of the Creator of the Universe.

Since the beginning of time, people have asked, "*How long, O Lord?*" (We saw the martyrs ask this in Chapter 6). For thousands of years, God has been patient, holding back the final curtain to give people time to repent. But here, the "Mighty Angel" announces that the clock has finally hit zero.

The Meaning of "No More Delay" and "The Mystery of God":

In simple American English, we might say, "The wait is over. The 'secret plan' God hinted at through the old prophets is finally going to be finished right now." John highlights two major points:

- **"There Will Be No More Delay!":** This signifies **The End of Patience**. This doesn't mean God is "rushing"; it means the "Day of Grace" is transitioning into the "Day of Completion." Everything that was held back by the "four angels at the corners of the earth" is now being unleashed.
- **"The Mystery of God will be Accomplished":** This signifies **The "Grand Reveal."** A "mystery" in the Bible isn't a "whodunnit" puzzle; it's a truth that was hidden in the past but is now being made clear. The "Mystery" is the full restoration of the world—God finally living with His people, evil being fully defeated, and the King taking His throne.

The Core Lesson:

God's patience has a purpose, but it also has a deadline. We often mistake God's silence for absence. We think that because He hasn't stepped in yet, He never will. But the Seventh Trumpet proves that **God is never late; He is only waiting for the perfect "hour, day, month, and year."** This teaches us that we should live with a sense of urgency, knowing that the "Delay" is a gift of time that will eventually run out.

The Illustration: The Director's "Action!"

Imagine a massive film set. Thousands of actors are in place, the sets are built, and the pyrotechnics are ready. For hours, everyone has been waiting. People are getting bored; some are even starting to leave, thinking the movie will never actually happen.

The Assistant Director (the Angel) stands in the middle of the set. He looks at his watch, raises his hand, and shouts into the headset, "**No more waiting! Action!**" In that second, the cameras roll, the lights flare, and the script that was written years ago finally becomes a reality. The Seventh Trumpet is God's "Action!" call for the finale of human history.

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Delay" Check:** Am I using the "delay" in God's judgment to get my life right with Him, or am I using it as an excuse to stay comfortable in my sins?
- **The "Mystery" Check:** Am I excited for the "Mystery of God" to be finished? Do I long for the day when everything "makes sense" and God's glory covers the earth?
- **The "Creator" Check:** The angel swore by the Creator of the "sea, land, and heaven." Do I trust the One who *made* everything to be the One who *fixes* everything?

The oath is taken. Now, God tells John to do something

Revelation 10:8–10

“(8) Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me once more: ‘Go, take the little scroll that lies 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 asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, ‘Take it and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey.’ (10) I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour.”

The Context:

John is no longer just a "cameraman" watching the vision; he is now a **participant**. God tells him to walk up to the massive, "mighty angel" and take the scroll. This is an act of bold faith.

But the angel doesn't tell him to *read* the scroll—he tells him to **eat it**. This is a powerful, symbolic action that we also see in the Old Testament with the prophet Ezekiel. It means that God's message isn't just supposed to be "information" in our heads; it has to become part of our very being.

The Meaning of "Sweet as Honey" and "Sour in the Stomach":

In simple American English, we might say, "God's Word feels wonderful when we first hear its promises, but it becomes heavy and difficult once we realize the weight of the judgment and the responsibility that comes with it." John uses these descriptions:

- **"Sweet as Honey in the Mouth":** This signifies **The Beauty of Truth**. God's Word is "sweeter than honey" (Psalm 119:103). It is beautiful to hear about God's victory, His justice, and the fact that there will be "no more delay." Knowing that God is in control is a joyful, "sweet" experience.
- **"Sour in the Stomach":** This signifies **The Burden of the Message**. Once the message is "digested," the reality sets in. John realizes that this victory involves the death of many and the final judgment of the world. It's "sour" because a true man of God takes no pleasure in the destruction of the wicked. It's the "bittersweet" nature of being a witness.
- **"Take it and Eat it":** This signifies **Internalization**. You can't just "glance" at God's plan. You have to "consume" it. You have to let it change you from the inside out before you are allowed to speak it to others.

The Core Lesson:

God's Word is both a Comfort and a Challenge. If your faith is only "sweet," you probably haven't "swallowed" the whole scroll. True discipleship involves the joy of knowing Jesus (the honey) and the "sour" weight of carrying His cross and sharing a message that the world might reject. This teaches us that **to be a messenger for God, you have to feel the weight of His heart.**

The Illustration: The Doctor's News

Imagine a doctor who has discovered the cure for a terrible disease. When he first reads the formula, it is **sweet as honey**. He's thrilled! He thinks of all the people who will be saved.

But as he "digests" the reality, his stomach turns **sour**. He realizes how many people have already died, how hard it will be to get the medicine to everyone, and that some people will stubbornly refuse to take it. The "truth" is glorious, but the "application" of it in a broken world is heartbreaking. John is that doctor. He has the "cure" (the Gospel and God's plan), but he feels the pain of the "disease" (the world's sin).

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Diet" Check:** Am I "eating" the Word of God daily, or am I just "snacking" on the parts that feel good?
- **The "Heart" Check:** When I see the world struggling, is my "stomach sour" with compassion, or am I just waiting for judgment to fall?

- **The "Boldness" Check:** Am I willing to walk up to the "Mighty Angel" (to God's presence) and take what He has for me, even if it's a difficult assignment?

John has eaten the scroll. Now he is given his final marching orders.

Revelation 10:11

“Then I was told, ‘You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings.’”

The Context:

John has just "eaten" the scroll. He has felt the sweetness of God's glory and the sourness of the coming judgment in his own gut. Now, he isn't allowed to just sit there and process it.

The "intermission" is over. This verse serves as a **re-commissioning**. John might have thought his job was done after recording the first six trumpets, but God is telling him, "There is more work to do." He is being sent back into the fray to speak to the entire world. This sets the stage for the massive, global visions we see in the chapters to follow.

The Meaning of "Prophecy Again" and "Peoples, Nations, Languages, and Kings":

In simple American English, we might say, "Your job isn't finished yet; you have a message that every single person on earth—from the poorest worker to the most powerful president—needs to hear." John highlights two key aspects of his mission:

- **"You Must Prophecy Again":** This signifies **Renewed Purpose**. The word "must" (*dei* in Greek) implies a divine necessity. It's not a suggestion. It shows that **God's witnesses can't retire until the job is done**. Even when the message is "sour" or the world is dark, the call to speak the truth remains.
- **"Many Peoples, Nations, Languages, and Kings":** This signifies **The Global Reach of the Gospel**. This is the four-fold description of humanity that appears throughout Revelation. It means the "Mystery of God" isn't just for a small group or one country; it is a **universal reality**. No king is too high to hear it, and no "language" is too obscure for God to reach.

The Core Lesson:

The Truth is for everyone, even those who don't want to hear it. John is being sent to "Kings"—the very people who often hold the most "idols" (as we saw in Chapter 9). This teaches us that **the Church's mission is always outward**. We don't just "eat the Word" for our own health; we eat it so we have the strength to tell others that the "No More Delay" announcement has been made.

The Illustration: The Reluctant Messenger

Imagine a messenger in a war-torn country. He's tired, he's seen too much destruction, and he just wants to go home. He's already delivered six messages to the front lines.

But the General hands him one last packet of letters. He says, "I know you're tired, and I know the road is dangerous. But these letters are for the leaders of the enemy camp, the people in the villages, and the soldiers in the trenches. If you don't go, they will never know that the peace treaty has been signed."

The messenger takes a deep breath, "eats" his rations (the scroll), and heads back out. That is John. He is the messenger who refuses to quit because the message is too important to keep to himself.

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Must" Check:** Do I feel a "must" in my own life to share God's hope with others, or have I become too comfortable just "watching" the visions?
- **The "Reach" Check:** Do I limit my "prophesying" (sharing the truth) to people who are just like me, or am I willing to speak to different "languages and nations"?
- **The "Endurance" Check:** Am I ready to "prophesy again" even when I feel like I've already done enough?

John is ready. The scroll is in his stomach, and the mission is in his heart.

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the reminder in this chapter that Your plans are unfolding exactly according to Your will. Even when parts of Your purpose remain hidden, we trust in Your wisdom and sovereignty.

Help us to receive Your Word as John did—sweet because it reveals Your truth, yet taken seriously because it calls us to faithful obedience. Give us courage to proclaim Your message with humility and boldness.

Keep us steadfast as Your purposes move toward completion, and strengthen our hope in the day when every mystery is fully revealed.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.