

***GOOD SERVANTS
AND THE SOVEREIGN
WILL OF GOD***



OUTLINE ... (REVELATION 10:1-11)

THEN I SAW ANOTHER MIGHTY ANGEL COMING DOWN FROM HEAVEN ...

I. A GOOD SERVANT OF CHRIST JESUS LIVES IN VIEW OF THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF ALMIGHTY GOD AS PREEMINENT IN ALL THINGS—INCLUDING THE EXERCISE OF HIS WRATH IN JUDGMENT, 10:1-7.

- (Revelation 10:1-7 ESV) Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. 2 He had a little scroll open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, 3 **and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring.** When he called out, 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.” 5 And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on 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, **that there would be no more delay,** 7 **but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.**

A. John gives an account of a mighty angel descending from heaven, 10:1.

Grant Osborne ... God's absolute sovereignty is once again uppermost, especially in 10:1-7. ... The seven thunders bring back the image of Sinai and God's oath of judgment in Psalm 29. John clearly intends this as a warning to those who are resisting God. How can they think they can stand against the Lord of the universe? ... The events that will bring human history to a close are now clear to those with ears to hear (2:7, 11, 17, etc.), and the saints must be cognizant of the seriousness of the issues. God is indeed sovereign over his created world, and the “mighty angel” demonstrates this dominion by planting his feet on land and sea in the name of God and of Christ. **When he swears “the delay is over,” the reader is startled by the suddenness and the power of the assertion. That**

moment the whole Bible has been preparing for, the event the people of God have awaited for millennia, has arrived. [Osborne, G. R. (2002). *Revelation* (pp. 405-406). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.]

The mighty angel announces that the end is coming and there will be no more delay. Seven times the seven churches of Revelation are called to hear what the Spirit has to say to them. They, and we, must now hear and heed this urgent call.

- (Revelation 2:7a ESV) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

B. The mighty angel has a little scroll which is open in his hand, 10:2a.

In his prophecy concerning the end times Daniel asked two questions: ***How long shall it be until the end?*** And, ***What shall be the outcome of these things?*** The mighty angel has in his hand a scroll that will answer both questions.

- (Daniel 12:5-10 ESV) Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank of the stream and one on that bank of the stream. 6 And someone said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, “**How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?**” 7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be finished. 8 I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, “O my lord, **what shall be the outcome of these things?**” 9 He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. 10 Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly. **And none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand.**”

C. The mighty angel sets his feet on land and sea and calls out with a loud voice, 10:2b-4.

- (Psalm 29:3–4 ESV) The voice of the LORD is over the waters; **the God of glory thunders**, the LORD, over many waters. 4 The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.
- (Amos 3:8 ESV) **The lion has roared**; who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?
- (Jeremiah 25:30 ESV) You, therefore, shall prophesy against them all these words, and say to them: **“The LORD will roar from on high, and from his holy habitation utter his voice; he will roar mightily against his fold**, and shout, like those who tread grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth.”
- (Joel 3:16 ESV) **The LORD roars from Zion**, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth quake. **But the LORD is a refuge to his people, a stronghold to the people of Israel.**

D. The mighty angel then swore an oath that there would be no more delay in the mystery of God being fulfilled, 10:5-7.

The purpose of the oath is to declare the eschaton—the final chapter in the divine plan of earth history; the end of the world as we know it. The seventh trumpet introduces the final stage of the revelation—the period of time when the bowl judgments will be poured out.

John Walvoord ... ***The prediction is related to the full manifestation of the divine power, majesty, and holiness of God which will be evident in the glorious return of Christ, the establishment of His millennial kingdom, and the creation of the eternal state which will follow. **The ignorance of God and the disregard of His majestic person which characterize the present age as well as the great tribulation will exist no longer when Christ returns and manifests Himself in glory to the entire earth.** [Walvoord, J. F. (2008). *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (p. 172). Galaxie Software.]

II. A GOOD SERVANT OF CHRIST JESUS LIVES IN VIEW OF THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF ALMIGHTY GOD AS REVEALED IN THE HOLY WORD OF GOD, 10:8-9.

- (Revelation 10:8–9 ESV) 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 and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.”

EXCURSUS—JOHN CALVIN ON THE WHOLE SUBJECT OF RELIGION: TWO RULES ...

ONE RULE ... Not to dwell on this, let us here remember that on the whole subject of religion one rule of modesty and soberness is to be observed, and it is this, **in obscure matters not to speak or think, or even long to know, more than the Word of God has delivered.**

A SECOND RULE ... that in reading the Scriptures we should constantly direct our inquiries and meditations **to those things which tend to edification, not indulge in curiosity, or in studying things of no use.** And since the Lord has been pleased to instruct us, not in frivolous questions, but in solid piety, in the fear of his name, in true faith, and the duties of holiness, let us rest satisfied with such knowledge. Wherefore, **if we would be duly wise, we must renounce those vain babblings of idle men**, concerning the nature, ranks, and number of angels, without any authority from the Word of God.

RELEVANT SCRIPTURES WITH CALVIN’S COMMENTS IN MIND CONCERNING A GOD-DIRECTED APPROACH TO SCRIPTURE AND THE TRIVIAL PURSUITS OF A HUMAN-DIRECTED APPROACH ...

- (1 Timothy 1:5–7 ESV) The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. 6 **Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion**, 7 desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions.
- (2 Timothy 2:14–16 ESV) Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. 16 **But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness.**
- (Titus 3:8–9 ESV) The saying is trustworthy,

and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. 9 But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

A. John is commanded and commissioned to take the scroll and eat it.

Martin Luther ... *We must make a great difference between God's word and the word of man.* A man's word is a little sound which flies into the air and soon vanishes; but the word of God is greater than heaven and earth, yea, it is greater than death and hell, for it is the power of God, and remains everlastingly. Therefore we ought diligently to learn God's word, and we must know certainly and believe that God himself speaks with us.

B. The angel described the effect the scroll would have as he ate it.

Osborne ... The second theme is the prophetic witness of the church. God commands John to reenact the commissioning of Ezekiel ... the sweetness of obedience but the bitterness of rejection and suffering. Through John the church is called to the same ministry of preaching repentance and judgment to a generation that has turned their backs on God. It will involve persecution and even martyrdom (the sour stomach), but God has given his people the privilege of proclaiming his Word (the sweet mouth), and that is enough. [Osborne, G. R. (2002). *Revelation* (p. 406). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.]

III. A GOOD SERVANT OF CHRIST JESUS LIVES IN VIEW OF THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF ALMIGHTY GOD IN RELATION TO HIS SERVICE TO GOD, 10:10-11.

- (Revelation 10:10–11 ESV) And 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 And I was told, “You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings.”

We only know the blessing of the stewardship God has given us through loving, loyal obedience. **John took the scroll and ate it because he was a good servant and a good soldier of Christ Jesus.**

A. John was a good servant of Christ Jesus.

- (1 Timothy 4:6–7 ESV) If you put these things before the brothers, you will be **a good servant of Christ Jesus**, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. 7 Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness.

B. John was a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

- (2 Timothy 2:1–4 ESV) You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. 3 Share in suffering as **a good soldier of Christ Jesus**. 4 No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.



ROAD NARROWS AHEAD

