

Copyright © Two Journeys Ministry

Andrew M. Davis Sermon

Notes [www.twojourneys.org](http://www.twojourneys.org)

Please use in accordance with the copyright policy found at [twojourneys.org](http://twojourneys.org)

## **A Mighty Angel and a Little Scroll**

### **Revelation 10:1-11**

The Book of Revelation pulls back the veil between the physical and spiritual world as no other book of the Bible... as that veil is pulled back, and as we peer into the invisible spiritual world, we can see more things than we could have conceived by our unaided imaginations

Certainly the most significant invisible reality we see by the Book of Revelation is the glory of God... the Triune God... God the Father, seated on a throne of glory; God the Son – Jesus Christ – pictured as a high priest robed in white walking among seven golden lampstands, or as a Lion ready to roar out with power, or as a Lamb looking as if it had been slain; and God the Spirit, pictured as a seven-fold lampstand blazing with the fire of holiness... the Triune God is the central reality of the invisible, spiritual realm that surrounds us at every moment... and no book in the Bible so powerfully reveals the hidden nature of God's glory like Revelation

But that is not all the Book of Revelation unveils about the spiritual realms... for there are awesome created beings that we would never have known about if we did not read them in this book... that includes beings we commonly call ANGELS

Context:

The Apostle John is on the Island of Patmos off the coast of modern-day Turkey, exiled by the Roman Empire for his bold faithfulness in spreading the gospel

On that tiny, rocky, barren, deserted island, the Apostle John was worshipping by the Spirit on the Lord's Day ... and he had a vision of Christ ministering to the seven churches; Christ entrusted through John letters to these seven churches that make up Revelation 2-3. Then John is commanded by Christ Himself to ascend through the sky through a doorway opened for him in heaven, to learn about the FUTURE. John was empowered by the Spirit to obey this command, and he passed through that doorway into the heavenly realms and saw a THRONE IN HEAVEN with SOMEONE SEATED ON IT... that is the throne of Almighty God, the Father, the Creator and Ruler and Sustainer of the entire universe... God the Creator is worshiped in heaven by twenty-four elders and by four living creatures and by 100 million angels.

In the right hand of God there is a scroll, sealed with seven seals. Jesus steps forward, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah... looking like a Lamb that had been slain. **Christ alone** is worthy to take the scroll and break open its seals. When he takes the scroll, all of heaven breaks out in cascading worship of Christ the Redeemer, whose blood purchased people for God from every tribe, language, people, and nation

Jesus began opening the seven seals, and as he did, events began unfolding on earth... the four horsemen of the Apocalypse bringing false peace, war, famine, and death... the martyrs who would be slaughtered for the word of God; and with the sixth seal, the end of the physical universe. At the end of chapter 6, the terror-filled inhabitants of the earth seek refuge, crying out: **THE GREAT DAY OF THE WRATH OF GOD AND OF THE LAMB HAS COME, AND WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO STAND?**

Revelation 7 answers this question: the redeemed, sealed from every tribe of Israel and from every nation on the face of the earth, a multitude greater than anyone can count; this is the goal of redemptive history

Then the Lamb breaks open the seventh seal, which gives way to the seven trumpets... the first six of these seven trumpets sound in Revelation 8-9 resulting in terrifying judgments on the vegetation,

the oceans, the fresh water, on the sun/moon/stars... a demonic horde is unleashed to torment the people like a plague of locusts and scorpions... and a demonic army of 200 million to slaughter 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the earth's population

So we come to Revelation 10, before the seventh trumpet sounds... a vision of a mighty angel and a little scroll... and the recommissioning of the prophet John to speak future words of sweetness and bitterness that we desperately need to hear and to EAT!

Hear the text:

**Revelation 10:1-11** 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 legs were like fiery pillars. <sup>2</sup> 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, <sup>3</sup> and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion. When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke. <sup>4</sup> 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." <sup>5</sup> Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. <sup>6</sup> 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! <sup>7</sup> 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."

<sup>8</sup> Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me once more: "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." <sup>9</sup> 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." <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> Then I was

told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."

#### I. The Mighty Angel Described (vs. 1-4)

##### A. What are Angels?

1. The word "angel" literally means "messenger"
2. Angels are CREATED SPIRITUAL BEINGS, who have no physical existence—no birth, no aging, no death—they are SPIRITS, not flesh and blood
3. There are good angels and there are wicked angels, called demons, led by their wicked king, Satan
4. Their activity in the Bible is summed up:

***Hebrews 1:14 Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?***

##### B. What Are the Benefits of Studying Angels in Scripture?

1. Understanding more of the complexity of the spiritual realms that God has made
2. Knowing how protected we are, that angels fight for us and keep us from being tempted and attacked beyond what we can bear
3. Imitating angels in their passionate, prompt, heart-felt obedience, that we can obey God on earth as they obey God in heaven

##### C. What Is the Danger in Focusing on Angels?

1. Many false artistic depictions of angels use IMAGINATION and not SCRIPTURE
2. People are tempted to WORSHIP angels for their glory... even John did this twice at the end of the Book of Revelation
3. Satan's masquerade

***2 Corinthians 11:14 Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.***

#### D. How Are Angels Especially Active in the Book of Revelation?

1. 73 of the 188 mentions of angels in the NT are found in the Book of Revelation
2. Since Revelation is all about the unveiling of the spiritual realms, it is not surprising that angels figure so prominently
3. Angels are depicted around the throne of God worshipping him continually; this is the most powerful activity and delight of angels
4. Angels are directly active in unleashing the wrath of God on earth
5. For example, Revelation 8-9: Angels sound the seven trumpets bringing terrifying judgments on earth... and Revelation 16 shows the angels pouring out the bowls of God's wrath on the earth
6. Perhaps the most important role of angels up to this point in redemptive history has been their activity in delivering to us the Word of God... it is depicted as mediated to us by ANGELS
  - a. Revelation 1, an angel was tasked to bring the Book of Revelation itself to the Apostle John
  - b. The law of Moses itself was put into effect through angels, Stephen and Paul both teach us
  - c. Angels carry messages from God to the prophets... and this is exactly what this angel in Revelation 10 will do for John
7. There is a clear parallel between this chapter and Daniel 10... that breathtakingly glorious angel appears to bring Daniel the prophecy recorded in Daniel 11-12, and the experience knocked him to the ground in terror

#### E. How is this Angel Described?

***Revelation 10:1-3 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 legs were like fiery pillars. <sup>2</sup> 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, <sup>3</sup> and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion.***

1. He is described as “another” mighty angel... in other words, he is like some of the other angels John has already seen in his vision; John describes him as MIGHTY... powerful, able make war
2. He is COMING DOWN from heaven; this means John is now no longer in heaven in his visions, but back down on the earth
3. He is ROBED IN A CLOUD: often in the Bible, gathering storm clouds represent the wrath and judgment of God
4. Yet, there is a RAINBOW above the head of the angel... this of course hearkens back to the end of the flood
5. His face was LIKE THE SUN... again, the sense of radiant, brilliant, heavenly light... angels shine like the sun in glory
6. Legs are like FIERY PILLARS: this must remind us of the pillar of fire that protected and led Israel through the desert and the Red Sea
7. He was HOLDING A LITTLE SCROLL laying open in his hand
  - a. This scroll is the focus of the entire vision... it is his reason for coming down from heaven to interact with John
  - b. It is called “little,” but the impact on the world is as great as the impact of a tiny seed which grows to a massive forest of oaks
  - c. It LAY OPEN in the angel’s hand... represents God’s willingness to REVEAL the contents to the human race

By contrast, Daniel was told to seal several of his visions for the future... their meanings will be HIDDEN until then:

***Daniel 12:4 But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end.***

8. In this OPEN SCROLL lays the revelation of mysteries that God will only grant through his prophet at the end of the world

***Revelation 10:7 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.***

9. This vision is about the granting by God of the revelation of the final mysteries of God
10. Beyond the scroll, the angel takes a MIGHTY STANCE on the surface of the earth:

***Revelation 10:2-3 He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, <sup>3</sup> and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion.***

- a. This stance is one of a mighty warrior, who cannot be moved from his position
  - b. John tells us the right foot in the sea, and the left foot on the land
  - c. I DON'T KNOW WHY the right and left are signified... however, it gives us a sense of his awesome power, but also that the message he comes to bring encompasses the entire surface of planet earth... it will affect all the creatures in the heavens (for this angel's head reaches the clouds and his face is like the sun), the earth (for his left foot is there), and the sea (for his right foot is there)... the word of God, small as it may seem in his hand, is more permanent than any of them
11. This angel's VOICE is like the roar of a lion... the overpowering might of God in his unbreakable Word

#### F. The Seven Thunders and the Limited Revelation

***Revelation 10:3-4 When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke. <sup>4</sup> 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."***

1. We don't know what the "voices of the seven thunders" are... perhaps other heavenly angels whose voices sound like thunder
2. They say certain things, intelligible to John, but he is forbidden from writing them down... they are SEALED UP, not revealed to the human race
3. Like what happened when the Apostle Paul visited heaven himself but was forbidden to talk about it:

***2 Corinthians 12:4 He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.***

4. Thus, there are some MYSTERIES that God will not reveal ahead of time

***Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever***

II. The Message from the Angel: No More Delay (vs. 5-7)

A. The Solemn Oath

***Revelation 10:5-6 Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. <sup>6</sup> 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!"***

1. The angel takes this powerful stance
2. Then he raises his right hand to heaven and takes an oath
3. The taking of an oath is given for the purpose of giving a sense of absolute certainty to John and through him to us
4. He swears by the ETERNAL GOD... the God who lives forever, whose Kingdom never changes
5. He swears by the CREATOR GOD... the King of all creation
  - a. The text looks at all the SPHERES of creation, heaven, earth, the sea... and it extends also to all the creatures who dwell in those spheres
  - b. The God who made 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
  - c. This is the God of the universe... "BY HIM, I SWEAR" the angel is saying... OK... what do you swear???

B. The Main Message:

***Revelation 10:6 ... "There will be no more delay!"***



1. The unfolding of the plan of God seems so slow to us as we go through it
2. We are forever asking, "How long, O Lord?!!!" Even the angels LONG TO KNOW!!

***Daniel 12:6 "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?"***

3. We saw the martyrs in heaven asking that very question

***Revelation 6:10-11 "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" <sup>11</sup> Then ... they were told to wait a little longer***

4. But there will come a time when human history will rapidly end
5. This is in the middle of the seven trumpets... the next thing that will happen is the sounding of the seventh trumpet
6. So we should transport ourselves to that point in history... all these events have happened, including the terrifying ecological plagues described in Revelation 8 and the even more terrifying demonic plagues described Revelation 9, THE TIME WILL BE VERY SHORT INDEED! *[as Jesus said]*

***Matthew 24:22 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.***

#### C. The Significance of this Promise

1. These days will be so severe, so terrible, so terrifying, that it will be vital for the people of God to know that they will not last long
2. When you see all these things, you know the end is VERY NEAR

#### D. The Mystery of God Accomplished

***Revelation 10:7 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."***

1. The mystery of God is his plan for redemption

***Ephesians 1:9-10 And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, <sup>10</sup> to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment - to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.***

2. This is what this is all about... an end to the rebellion and disunity caused by sin
3. This mystery was hidden in the mind of God before the foundation of the world, but has been gradually revealed step by step through the holy prophets and apostles
4. The Book of Revelation, represents the final stage of prophetic unfolding of the mysterious plan of God in writing ahead of time
5. In the days of the seventh trumpet, the end of all the messages ever given through both the OT and NT prophets and apostles will be ACCOMPLISHED... fulfilled

TO THAT END, the angel has come to recommission the Apostle John to finish his writing... the rest of the Book of Revelation

### III. The Mission of the Angel: John Commissioned Again (vs. 8-11)

#### A. The Command to John: Go Take the Book from the Angel

***Revelation 10:8 Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me once more: "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land."***

1. The giving of the scroll was the whole reason for the mighty angel's descent from heaven to earth

#### B. John's Request of the Angel

***Revelation 10:9 So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll.***

But the angel told something about this scroll and the effect it would have on him... and on every faithful heart that receives it.

#### C. Eating the Book: Sweet and Bitter

***Revelation 10:9-10 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.***

1. The angel told John to EAT the scroll, representing the prophetic revelation of the future
2. Ezekiel ate a scroll in Ezekiel 3 that tasted sweet in his mouth; so also Jeremiah 15, he said he ate God's words, they were his JOY and DELIGHT!
3. The eating of the scroll represents a TOTAL ABSORPTION of the word of God into our inner being... it is our food, our nourishment
4. John is to take this message into his mouth and digest it inwardly
5. NOW the sweetness of the word of God in our mouths is well known... both Ezekiel and Jeremiah delighted in God's as sweet as honey in their mouth
6. BUT John's experience would be different... sweet, yes, but also BITTER in the stomach
7. The final outcome of the Book of Revelation is utterly glorious, the final salvation of the elect from every nation on earth and a New Heavens and New Earth, a New Jerusalem, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband... radiant glory shining everywhere... what could be sweeter than that??
8. But it comes at a terrible cost as we travel the journey there... the destruction of the world, and all the unbelievers, their condemnation under the wrath of God, is bitter for us... this is why Jesus WEPT over Jerusalem; this is why Paul was in unceasing anguish for the lost among the Jews

***Ezekiel 33:11 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?'***

9. The carnage of the Book of Revelation is all yet to come... and the events of Revelation should be BOTH bitter and sweet;
10. Yet we know it will only be sweet in the end... for in heaven there will be no more grieving or mourning or pain for anything

#### D. John Recommissioned to Preach to the Nations

***Revelation 10:11 Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."***

1. John's eating of the scroll results in his writing of a prophetic message that the entire world MUST HEAR...
2. YOU MUST prophesy... it is absolutely necessary for you to write this message down for the world; John is called by God and has no choice!
3. The Greek is a little unclear: you must prophecy ABOUT many nations (ESV: meaning they are the topic of John's prophetic words)... or BEFORE many nations (KJV: meaning they are the audience)
4. Here, we have peoples, nations and languages... but also KINGS
  - a. The word of God overrules and outlasts the reigns of all kings

***Isaiah 40:23-24 He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing. <sup>24</sup> No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.***

- b. But also some of the kings will be converted by hearing the prophetic word preached

***Isaiah 52:15 so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.***

#### IV. Applications

- A. Understand the reality of the invisible spiritual realms that surround us constantly
- B. Understand the terrible road that still lies ahead of us before God's glorious plan is fulfilled
- C. Let this chapter warn all of us against the evils and deceptions of sin

***Ephesians 5:3-6 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. <sup>4</sup> Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup> For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person-- such a man is an idolater-- has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. <sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.***

- D. Let us not lament about why God's plan is so slow in unfolding... everything is on schedule, and there will come a point when there will be no more delay

The temptation of all of us is to read the words of the Book of Revelation and then go out and look at the sun in the sky like it always is, the birds flying in flocks like they always do; the trees swaying in the summer breeze the way they did before your grandfather was born; you go visit the ocean, and its reassuring surf keeps crashing on the shore like it always has for centuries... and you watch the human race hustle and bustle and build fortunes and parents raising their children – taking them to the park, watching them play like they did when they were children...

And you think... is this really going to happen, the things written about in Revelation?? YES THEY WILL!!!

- E. Remember that God's apparent delay is to work salvation in lost people

***2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.***

1. And we are called on to preach this gospel to lost people, warning them to FLEE TO CHRIST
2. Also, Peter calls on us to live holy lives as we SPEED THE COMING OF THE END by evangelism and missions

***2 Peter 3:11-12 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup> as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.***

***2 Peter 3:14 make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.***