

## Introduction

*The interlude between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Seals (Rev. 7) focused on the preparation and disposition of God's people. This pause in the action in Revelation 10 is a series of activities and pronouncements directed at those left behind. This dramatically illustrates the difference between the Seals as judgments experienced by everyone, and the Trumpets as the wrath of God from which believers are exempt. This is one of 8 such heavenly previews which are each followed by their corresponding activities in the world.*

*'Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Matthew 6:10*

## Read verses 1-4

<sup>1</sup>I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire; <sup>2</sup>and he had in his hand a little book which was open. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land; <sup>3</sup>and he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars; and when he had cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices.

<sup>4</sup>When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."

### **Q: What represents the Word of God in this passage?**

A: The "little book" or scroll.

**Observation:** *This is the first of four mentions of God's Word after the removal of the Church found in Revelation 10-11:*

- The testimony of God's Word by a "strong angel". (Rev.10)
- The testimony of God's Word by the "seven peals of thunder". (Rev. 10)
- The testimony of God's Word by the Two Witnesses, (Rev.11)
- And finally with the sounding of the 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet, the appearance in heaven of the Ark of the Covenant, the strongest biblical representation of God's Word. (Rev.11)

**Point:** *With the removal of the Church, God's Word is focused on those left behind and the devastating results it will produce for them. The heavenly events are again replayed in the earthly arena.*

### **Q: What might be important about this angel's stance?**

A: His "right foot on the sea" is an oft-repeated biblical metaphor for all the Gentile nations of the world, and "his left on the land" for the nation Israel. Whatever he does or says will be directed to everyone still on earth at this time.

### **Q: Why does this sound familiar?**

A: Satan, upon being throne down to earth, takes up a similar looking stance when he produces the Antichrist from the sea (Rev. 13:1) and the False Prophet from the land. (Rev. 13:11)

And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore.  
*Revelation 13:1*

**Point:** *The actions of Satan in Revelation 13 counterfeit that which is taking place in Revelation 10. It has familiar parallels but the differences in the details betray his agenda.*

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**Q: How might this “little scroll” be related to the larger one introduced in Revelation 5?**

A: Most likely this is a subset of all that remains at this point in order to fulfill God’s Word.

**Q: Then why is it not sealed?**

A: When the 7<sup>th</sup> and last Seal was broken, it revealed the entire remaining sequence of both the Seven Trumpets and the Seven Bowls. It is open because all that remains is the fulfillment of what the Lamb already unsealed.

**Q: What are the major contrasts between the “strong angel” and the “seven peals of thunder”?**

- The angel cries out “as when a lion roars”; the seven peals sound like thunder.
- The angel is heard from his earthly stance; the peals of thunder are heard only from heaven.
- The angel’s message will be divulged to us; the peals’ will not.

**Q: Why even mention the “seven peals of thunder” if their message is withheld from us?**

A: We have never been guaranteed that God has revealed everything, only that which is adequate to act upon by faith on the basis of what is revealed to us in His Word.

**Observation:** *There seems to be a progression in Revelation of the appearance and working of “thunder” [See Revelation 4:5, 6:1, 8:5, 10:4, 11:19, 14:2, 16:18, and 19:6] Thunder is used to describe a message or activity which can only be properly understood by believers and appears to be just a loud and frightening sound to unbelievers.*

“Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

John 12:28-29

**Application:** *We are categorically **NOT provided** all the information or details of what is to come—we are only given enough to successfully **navigate by faith**.*

<sup>5</sup>Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, <sup>6</sup>and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there will be delay no longer, <sup>7</sup>but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets.

## Read verses 5-7

**Q: How does the message “there will be delay no longer” confirm the timing of each phase of the Seals, Trumpets, and Bowls?**

A: Each phase progressively escalates like a boulder starting slowly at the top of the hill and its speed increasing exponentially the closer it comes to the bottom.

**Q: Is there an example of this in Scripture?**

A: As originally documented by Dr. Darrell Bock of Dallas Theological Seminary, this is how the fulfillment of more than 325 prophecies came about in the course of Christ’s entire First Coming, three phases each much shorter than the previous and with twice as many prophetic fulfillments.

**Application:** Think of this as a three-stage rocket where its speed doubles with each new stage.

- Stage 1: Nativity & Childhood (~31.5 years), 14% of prophecies fulfilled.
- Stage 2: Public Ministry (3.5 years), 28% of prophecies fulfilled.
- Stage 3: Triumphal Entry to Pentecost (~57 days), the remaining 58% are fulfilled.

*This is why the Seals span from the beginning to a little past the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week, the Trumpets follow in a shorter span, and the Bowls in a correspondingly much more compressed time frame. Their respective result is the elimination of 25% of the population, then 50%, and finally 100%.*

**Note:** Because of the worldwide severity of the Bowls and the fact that no life would be found if they are not quickly executed, there are those who posit that the extra 30 days in the “1,290 days” (Dan. 12:11) over the “1,260 days” (Rev. 12:6) is to accommodate the Bowls.

**Q: What feature of the First Coming might this final fulfillment echo?**

A: The work of the First Coming officially came to an end when on the cross Christ declared, “It is finished.” (Jn. 19:30), and this signals the completion of the Second Coming when it is again stated by the angel that it “is finished”.

**Q: How is this complemented in v.6?**

A: It is the affirmation of God’s sovereignty by revisiting the Creation Narrative. (Ex. 20:11)

**Point:** The plan in eternity past **was** the Lamb, the plan for temporal Earth is the Lamb, and the plan for eternity future **will be** the Lamb.

**Q: The message of the “seven peals of thunder” may be withheld, but how might we surmise precisely the contents of “the mystery of God”?**

A: Verse 7 says it has been “preached” using the Greek word “evaggolizo” (Strong’s #2097). It is used prolifically throughout the New Testament for preaching the Gospel and proclaiming God’s Word.

**Application:** God's entire **plan** past, present, and future is fulfilled in the **Lamb**, the embodiment and fulfillment of the **Gospel** not just for the First and Second Comings, but for all **eternity** past and future yet to come, and not just limited to the **earthly** realm, but extends to the **heavenly** as well.

### Read verses 8-11

<sup>8</sup>Then the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, "Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land."

<sup>9</sup>So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book.

And he said to me, "Take it and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."

<sup>10</sup>I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.

<sup>11</sup>And they said to me, "You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

**Q: Why does this sound familiar?**

A: It seems to parallel the experience of the Prophet Ezekiel.

<sup>8</sup>"Now you, son of man, listen to what I am speaking to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you." <sup>9</sup>Then I looked, and behold, a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll was in it. <sup>10</sup>When He spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back, and written on it were lamentations, mourning and woe. <sup>11</sup>Then He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel."

<sup>2</sup>So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll. <sup>3</sup>He said to me, "Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you."

Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth.

Ezekiel 2:8-3:3

**Q: But what is the difference between the assignments of these two figures?**

A: Whereas God's message through Ezekiel was limited to just Israel, (Eze. 2:7). John's is "concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings" — in other words, the whole world.

**Q: But why does Ezekiel not experience the bitterness of consuming God's Word as did John?**

A: Even though the wrath of God was imminent, there was still an opportunity remaining in Ezekiel's time when one could act upon the message and repent; at this point in the End Times sequence all that is left is the bitterness of the wrath of God.

**Q: Is God actually refusing to allow those remaining on earth to repent and be saved?**

A: No, this has come about by the repeated hardening of the hearts of those living at this point. Just as Pharaoh chose to harden his heart for the first three plagues of the Exodus, God gave him over to his choices and hardened his heart for the remainder of His plagues. God, who sees the end from the beginning, only does this when there will no turning back from their rejection of Him.

**Point:** At some point, God gives a person over to the contrary choices each stubbornly refuses to properly address.

**Application:** The sounding of the 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet, which comprises all the **Bowls**, signals the final **end** when all that remains is the most intense execution of God's **wrath** in history.

## Overall Application

*The interlude of Revelation 10 serves as yet another example in Scripture that the working of God's Word is diametrically opposite for the heart inclined toward God and the hardened of heart. That which works to encourage the faithful works for judgment in the unfaithful. The difference in what takes place here is that the opportunity to repent and be saved is no longer an option as the repeated, stubborn refusal of those remaining has caused them to be given over to the consequences of their choices.*

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