

# Revelation 10

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy,  
 and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it,  
*because the time is near.* 1:3

**There was an INTERLUDE between the sixth and seventh seals,**  
 a pause which assured the church of its preservation and victory (Revelation 7). In the same way,  
**there is now an INTERLUDE between the sixth and the seventh trumpets**  
 to assure both the prophet and the church before the unveiling of the unholy trinity.

First, St. John is reassured of his commission and call from God. He is reassured that the word which he reveals is the Word of the Lord which will most surely come to pass. Dr. L. L. White, *Revelation*, p.267-269

## Read Revelation 10:1-4

### 10:1 The Mighty Angel

This is the second of three such angels which appear in the Book of Revelation (Cf. Rev 5:2; 18:21). The text stresses the fact that this is “another mighty angel,” not the same creature that appeared in Revelation 5:2. **In fact it is immediately evident that this messenger “coming down from heaven” is no ordinary angel.** He is, instead, **the Lord Jesus Himself.**

- † The adjective “**mighty**” signifies strength that belongs to God alone. In the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament (LXX), the use of this word in the heavenly sphere was reserved only for God Himself. The Gospel writers use the same term to describe Jesus as the One who is “mightier” than John the Baptist (cf. Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:7; Luke 3:16).
- † The “mighty angel” is “**robed in a cloud.**” Throughout the Old Testament only the coming of God is surrounded by the clouds of heaven. The Psalmist declares: “**He makes the clouds His chariots and rides on the wings of the wind.**” (Psalm 104:3). In the pillar of cloud and fire, the Lord led Israel through the wilderness (Exodus 13:21; 14:19-20; Numbers 9:17-21) and the “**Shekinah**,” the glory cloud of the divine presence rested over the ark of the covenant in tabernacle and temple (Exodus 40:34-35; Leviticus 16:2; 1 Kings 8:10; 2 Chronicles 5:13). The “Angel of the Lord,” that is, the pre-incarnate Christ, is also associated with the cloud of God’s glory (Exodus 14:19-20). In Daniel 7:13, the Son of Man approaches the Ancient of Days surrounded by the clouds. God speaks to Jesus from the cloud at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35). When Jesus returns to judge the earth He will come “on the clouds of heaven.” (Matthew 24:30). **Thus, without exception, throughout Scripture, only God is ever spoken of as having been “robed in a cloud.”**



- † This angel also has a **rainbow above his head**. In Revelation 4:3 a rainbow encircled the heavenly throne of God. In Ezekiel 1:28 the prophet tells us “*Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around Him.*” **The rainbow had originally been given as a gracious reminder of God’s promise not to destroy the world again by a flood** (Genesis 8:22; 9:13-17).
- † The Christological character of this angel is further corroborated by his facial appearance --- “**His face was like the sun.**” This again is language that Scripture reserves for God alone. The sun is a common image for the glory of God in the Old Testament (cf. Isaiah 60:1-3,20; Psalm 84:11). Malachi designates the coming Messiah as “*the Sun of Righteousness.*” (Malachi 4:2). On the Mount of Transfiguration Jesus’ face “*shone like the sun.*” (Matthew 17:2). When the exalted Christ appears to John in Revelation 1, “His face was like the sun shining in all of its brilliance.
- † One final detail completes the awesome image of the **Christophany** --- “**His legs were like fiery pillars.**” Once again, the language recalls the description of the glorified Christ in the Prologue - “*His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace.*” (Revelation 1:15). The Son of Man in Daniel’s vision had “*legs like the gleam of burnished bronze.*” (Daniel 10:6) The slight shift in language here serves to evoke even more strongly the image of the fiery pillar with which the Lord led the Children of Israel on their way to the land of promise. **In this way, the image of fiery pillars serves to express the strength and power of Christ as He serves to guard and guide His people.** Dr. L. L. White, *Revelation*, p. 269-271



## See “Angel of the Lord” excursus

### 10:2 The Little Scroll

A “little scroll” (literally: “*little bible*”) lays open in the Angel of the Lord’s hand. It is carefully introduced at this point to highlight its role as a central component in the scene.

- † This is, in all probability, **the seven sealed scroll**, with its prophetic message of the unfolding plan of salvation and judgement throughout the New Testament era which had been opened by Christ in the preceding vision. Thus the verb “which lay open” is a perfect passive participle, literally, “*which has been opened,*” action completed in the past the effect of which continues in to the present. Dr. L. L. White, *Revelation*, p. 269-271

### 10:2 Stands over Land and Sea Repeated in 10:5 and 8; 3x emphasis!

His stature and His stance denote Christ’s absolute sovereignty over all who dwell upon the earth and the profound significance of the mission of salvation and judgement entrusted to Him. As this gigantic figure dominates the vision with one foot on the sea and the other on the land so the Lord rules over the totality of the earth. **In the visions to come, we will see Dragon imitate this, and the beasts arising from both land and sea. THE MIGHTY ANGEL OF THE LORD REMAINS IN CONTROL NONETHELESS.**

- † Note: visual of “all things under Christ’s feet”; see Eph. 1:22, 1 Cor. 15:25, Psalm 110:1
- † In spite of the 6 Trumpets in chapters 8-9, God’s people are to be comforted that their Lord and Savior is still ruler over land, sea and sky. [Revelation](#), Becker, p.156 paraphrase

## Read Revelation 10:3-4

### 10:3 The Roar of a Lion

The magnitude of the Angel’s cry --- “*like the roar of a lion*” --- indicates that He speaks with the full power and authority of God. It is no mere co-incidence that when the Lamb of God takes possession of the seven sealed scroll in chapter 5, He is further identified as “the Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (Revelation 5:5). The lion metaphor as an expression of that power is drawn from the Old Testament (Job 10:16, Amos 3:8, Hosea 11:10, Isaiah 31:4). The point of the image here in Revelation is clear: **that which the Angel of the Lord speaks is the Word and command of God. It is proclaimed with convincing power from on high.** White, [Revelation](#), p.273

### 10:3 The Seven Thunders

There is no specific reference elsewhere in Scripture to “the seven thunders.” Perhaps the allusion is the rumbling thunder of Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19:16ff). **Psalm 29** presents a eightfold song of praise to the thunder of God’s voice:

1. The voice of the Lord is **over the waters;**
2. The glory of God **thunders over the mighty waters.**
3. The voice of the Lord is **powerful**
4. the voice of the Lord is **majestic**
5. The voice of the Lord **breaks the cedars**
6. The voice of the Lord **strikes with flashes of lightning**
7. The voice of the Lord **shakes the desert**
8. The voice of the Lord **twists the oaks and strips the forests bare.**

**And in His temple all cry, “Glory!”** PSALM 29: 3-9



**The context of John’s vision strongly suggests that “the voices of the seven thunders” are indeed the voice of God.**

Dr. L. L. White, [Revelation](#), p.273-274

- † Everything that John wrote was revealed to him by God but evidently not everything that was revealed was to be written. **The Bible is complete but it is not exhaustive** (cf. [John 21:25](#)).
- † “Even the inspired prophet proclaims not everything which he, or God’s people, wish to know, but all that they need to know.” Franzmann, p. 76
- † Perhaps that which was revealed by the seven thunders was necessary for the prophet himself, in preparing him for that which he still must write or do, but it was not intended for the prophet’s audience. It is God alone Who controls and determines the content and the extent of His Revelation.

† Two possible interpretations:

- **An echo of Psalm 29 and the strength of God's Word right before the judgement day image in 10:6-7**
- "We assume that they had spoken of calamities of some kind, since thunder is a common symbol of God's Wrath. (Ex. 9:23, 1 Sam 7:10, Is 29:6). **The command to John not to write reminds us that there are many things about the future that God does not want us to know.**" Becker, p. 157

† **Deuteronomy 29:29** *The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.*

† It is not necessary for men to know all the mysteries and secrets of the future. Kretzmann, p.621

† Contrast: The Seven Thunders are "sealed up (v.4)"; the Little Scroll "lies open(v8)".

## Read Revelation 10:5-7

### 10:5 An Oath

The focus of the scene now returns to the Mighty Angel Himself. **A solemn oath to implement judgement upon the wicked is about to be taken.** This is signified by the customary raising of the right hand.

† In Deuteronomy 32:40, God takes a formal oath to reassure His people that He will surely bring judgement upon the wicked: "*I lift My hand to heaven and declare: As surely as I live forever, when I sharpen My flashing sword and My hand grasps it in judgement, I will take vengeance on My adversaries and repay those who hate Me.*" A similar scene occurs in Daniel 12:7 where we read: "*The man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by Him who lives forever.*" **In both instances, the substance of the God's promise is that His judgement will not fail to overtake those who have defied and denied Him.** The oath of the Angel of the Lord in Revelation 10 is similar in its context and content. Dr. L. L. White, Revelation, p.274-275

† God takes a **LAW/JUDGEMENT** oath! This should frighten unbelievers, and comfort believers!

† God's activity in creation and providence would culminate in judgment; all is ripe for the end, just as the promise had been given to the prophets of the Lord. This is good news to the servants of God, to the believers; it shows them that their deliverance is near. Kretzmann, p.621

† The majestic language of the oath in 10:6 identifies the eternal and omnipotent Creator as the guarantor of the promise. Only the God who is transcendent, absolutely beyond time and space --- **the God who is the source of everything that exists throughout the entire universe** --- has the power and authority to make such a promise and to keep it. Another Creation reference in Revelation!!!

† The triple specification of **heaven, earth, and sea**, stresses the universal scope of that divine power. The fact that the oath is made by Christ, the Angel of the Lord, serves to emphasize His absolute rule over the universe in the last days and His crucial role in the establishment of the new creation. He not only stands over creation (10:2), but He also swears an oath as the Creator of the world.

**Christ here was sent to announce to John the seventh trumpet, which brings a description of the great final judgment** (explained in 10:7). But the final fate of the world, which the last day brings on, is so terrible, that a special preparation for it is made at this place already by the appearance of this angel. One already hears the thunder of the terrible judgment which is in the offing, but what it all includes will be fully reported at the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Stoeckhardt, P.37

### 10:6 No More Delay!

The commitment is given that the promises of God will most surely be kept. His plan and purpose for the salvation of His people and the judgement of the wicked will be completely fulfilled. The opening phrase of the oath literally says “**there will be no interval of time!**” --- that is to say, nothing shall interrupt or prevent the accomplishment of God’s purpose.

### 10:7 The Mystery of God: *the Gospel!*

The word “mystery” refers to that which cannot be known by natural means, apart from divine revelation. St. Paul uses the term, most prominently in his letter to the Ephesians, to include **the entire plan of salvation by grace through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ**. It includes the plan of salvation as it was outlined throughout the Old Testament by the prophets and now comes to its culmination and completion in the prophecies of Revelation itself.



- † It is significant to note that the verb “announced” in conjunction with God’s message to the prophets is the Greek word “evangelical” which literally means “**to preach or proclaim the gospel.**” ***This is the only use of the term in the book of Revelation.***
- † The Old Testament is, as Luther remarks, the cradle which holds the Christ child. It is a proclamation of the Gospel from the first promise of Genesis 3:15 to the closing verses of Malachi.  
Dr. L. L. White, [Revelation](#), p.276
- † The mystery is that God has won the victory over the forces of evil and will reign forever!
- † “The mystery of God is His plan for men and the universe as he has revealed it in the gospel promises. In light of 1 Cor 2, we might say that the mystery of God includes all things which God has prepared for those who love Him. The mystery of God will be completed when these things will become visible, tangible realities for those who now walk by faith and not by sight. History will then have reached the goal God set for it in His eternal predestination, and God’s People will need to wait no longer for the fulfillment of all the promises in which they found hope and comfort in times of suffering and persecution. When that moment comes there will also be no more time for repentance on the part of those who, in spite of all God’s warnings, continued to worship false gods and carry on immoral practices (Rev 9:20ff).” Becker, p.158
- † “When the mystery of God is finished the time of suffering for believers and the time of grace for unbelievers will come to an end.” Becker, p. 159
- † The mystery will be accomplished: one familiar example, Job 19:25ff will be fulfilled and accomplished.

† NOTE: St. Paul describes the “mystery” in terms of the Gospel: note Ephesians 1:7-10; 3:1-6 (cp: Col 1:20); Note St. Peter in Acts 10:9-48 (especially v.34)

**We would expect the end to come immediately after Revelation 10:7, but the trumpet is not actually blown until Rev 11:15. . . . now we are to focus on this period from a different perspective --- that of the people of God and their activity in the world. While the focus before was on Satan and the mischievous work of his followers, now the emphasis is on God’s activity of divine grace through His people on earth.** Griffin, p48-49

## Read Revelation 10:8-11

### 10:8 The Focus On The “Little Scroll”

The heavenly voice which had spoken previously to forbid the message of the seven thunders (10:4) now commands John to approach the Angel of the Lord and take up the scroll that lies open in His hand. The scroll represents the message that it contains. **The command to take the scroll represents a reaffirmation of John’s call and commission as a prophet of God.**



† **Take and Eat it** The incident is based upon the call of the prophet Ezekiel. There, too, the call of God’s spokesman to proclaim the Word of the Lord was enacted in a visionary command to consume a scroll with the words of God written upon it. Thus. ***In the graphic imagery of the vision, the prophet digests God’s words so that he may regurgitate them before the people to whom God sends him.***

- *“Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out to me. In it was a scroll, which he unrolled before me. On both sides of it were written words of lament and warning and woe. And He said to me, “Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the House of Israel. So I opened my mouth and He gave me the scroll to eat. Then He said to me, “Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.” So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth.”* EZEKIEL 2:9-3:3

Dr. L. L. White, *Revelation*, p.277-278

† The Greek verb “Eat!” is most emphatic. It should be translated “Devour!” Jeremiah once used the same image to express his acceptance of his prophetic responsibility to faithfully proclaim the Word of God: *“When your words came, I ate them, they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear Your Name, O Lord God Almighty.”* JEREMIAH 15:16

Now there is something to consider: do you do that?

† As a result of man’s impenitence, which John had depicted in the last verses of the previous chapter, it is not an easy lot to preach this alien message to many people and nations and languages and Kings. As the world hates Christ, so it will also hate those who preach the gospel and who have been called to bear the cross after their Lord. So the message that brings much joy also invites bitterness and persecution. The earthly lot of the Christian will not always be an happy one. *Revelation*, Becker, p.161

- † John complies with the angel's instruction, and it is just as it was foretold -- the scroll is sweet and then bitter. "He finds the high privilege sweet to the taste, but he knows that his office means that he will be "a torment to those who dwell on the earth" (11:10) and will leave him with a bitter bellyful. John is assured not that his office will make him happy, but that it will prove valid and effective." Franzmann, p. 78
- † To some namely all believers, the end of the world brings the **sweetness of peace and joy**, but to the others, the wicked and the ungodly, the end of the world will bring **bitterness, sorrow, everlasting torment** . . . The unbelieving, godless world will despair when the Lord comes on his great day, but all believers will lift up their heads with joy, for their salvation is now at hand. So the end brings both, curse and blessing. John is to inform people about this in advance, so that everyone may receive due warning and so escape the curse and gain a blessing by renouncing the service of sin and taking his refuge to Christ by faith... STOECKHARDT, p.38
- † **Note John's authority and command to write the inspired and inerrant word of God (The Book of Revelation)**
- † 10:7 the urgency! Time is short; end is near. People are living without Christ and dying in sin!
- † Contrast: the first 6 Trumpets were heresies, false teachings, philosophies that lead people away from Christ. Here, the Gospel is to be preached right along with them, side by side. But there will be terrible consequences for those who preach/teach/share the Gospel (*Spoiler Alert For Rev 11*)! (Note **Matthew 24:14**)
- † Do you share the Gospel? Do you understand the urgency for those you know who do not believe in Christ?
- † Matthew 28:18-20 we too eat the scroll and share it. (Note Psalm 109:103, 19:10)

### **The Collect for the Word**

*Blessed Lord, who has caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and **inwardly digest them**, that by the patience and comfort of Thy holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life which Thou hast given us in our Savior Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. AMEN.*

### **10:11 Many Peoples, Nations, Languages, and Kings.**

John's message is of vital importance for all of humanity – he must prophesy! The fourfold classification, **representing the entire human race**, is characteristic of the Book of Revelation (cf. Revelation 5:9; 7:9; 13:7; 14:6; 17:15).

The symbolism of the Mighty Angel interlude, the oath and the eating of the little scroll, serves to validate the overall ministry of the prophets and to reaffirm the specific responsibility of John as a prophet of God in terms of this particular book of prophecy. Dr. L. L. White, *Revelation*, p.279

This preaching of the Gospel side by side with the proclamation of countless heresies in a largely impenitent world will bear consequences for the visible church. These consequences follow in the next chapter. *Revelation*, Becker, p.162

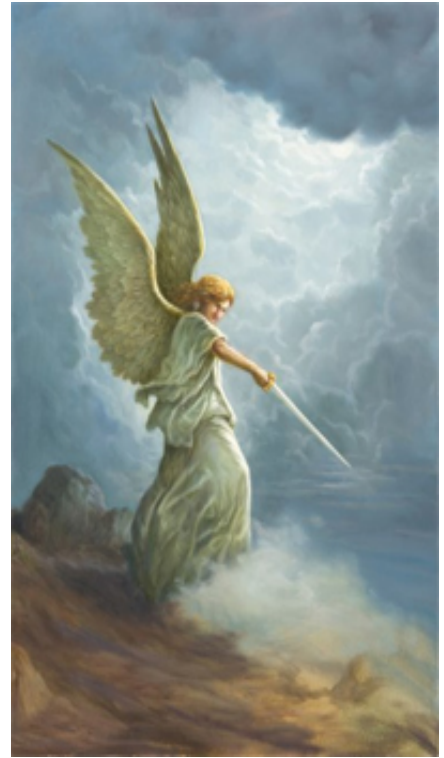
# ANGEL OF THE LORD

**ANGEL OF THE LORD** – a mysterious messenger of God, sometimes described as the Lord Himself (Gen, 16:10-13; Ex. 3:2-6; 23:20; Judges 6:11-18), but at other times as one sent by God. The Lord used this messenger to appear to human beings who otherwise would not be able to see Him and live (Ex. 33:20).

The Angel of the Lord performed actions associated with God, such as revelation, deliverance, and destruction; but he can be spoken of as distinct from God (2 Sam. 24:16; Zech. 1:12). This special relationship has led many to conclude that the Angel of the Lord was Jesus in a pre-incarnate form.

A treatise on the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament is incomplete without a discussion of those passages from Genesis (22:11 f.) to Malachi (3:1) in which divine names and attributes are ascribed to the Angel of the Lord. In Genesis 22:11-12 we read: ***“The Angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, Abraham, Abraham, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me”*** is in itself sufficient reason to reject the idea that a created angel is here speaking. But more:

not only does Abraham call the name of the place **Jehovah jireh** (The Lord shall see), but in the subsequent address of the Angel of the Lord calls Himself the Lord who has sworn by Himself to bless Abraham and multiply his seed (vv.15-18). No created angel could make that statement. The story of Moses at Mount Horeb (Ex. 3:1-15) reveals in great detail the identity of the Angel of the Lord. The Angel who appeared to Moses in the burning bush could not have been a created angel, because in v. 4 the Angel of the Lord identifies Himself with Jehovah. But more: the Angel of the Lord describes Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of His people Israel, which Moses is to liberate from the Egyptian bondage. Upon Moses’ insistent pleas for a more precise identification the Angel of the Lord identifies Himself as the essential and unchanging God, the **I AM THAT I AM.**” Frances Pieper, D.D., *Christian Dogmatics*, Volume I, Page 395-397,



“The Angel of the Lord is different from Jehovah in regard to His Person, and yet one with Him in essence.” He adduces the following proof texts: Gen. 16:7-14; chapters 18-19; 21:17-19; 22:11-18; 31:11-13, cp. 28:11-22; 33:25-30, cp. Hos. 12:5; 48:15 f.; Ex.3:1-7; 13:21, cp. 14:19; 23:20 f.; 33:14 and Is. 63:8-9; Joshua 5:13; 6:2; Judges 6:11-24; 13:3-25. ***“In their native sense these passages teach that the Angel of the Lord is the uncreated angel, identical with Jehovah, to whom divine attributes, works, names, and worship are ascribed.*”**

What Scripture teaches concerning the “Angel of Jehovah” confirms what Luther says concerning the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament in general: “In the New Testament everything is clearly and powerfully attested of the holy, divine Trinity that in the Old Testament is not so clearly set forth, though it is strongly indicated also there” (St. L. X:1019). Frances Pieper, D.D., *Christian Dogmatics*, Volume I, Page 395-397,