



A Systematic Expository Study on the book of REVELATION

STUDY 27: THE MYSTERY OF GOD AND ITS FULFILMENT

Revelation 10:1-11

This chapter with the next chapter till verse fourteen constitute one continued vision. The vision (Revelation 10:1-11 and 11:1-14) is an important interlude or interval between the events which are to occur under the sixth trumpet and the seventh trumpet. The seventh trumpet signals the final overthrow of the formidable power which had opposed the reign of God on the earth, and the reign of righteousness. When the seventh trumpet is sounded, then “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 11:15).

Although many had been saved and washed in the blood of the Lamb as they placed their faith in Christ during the period of the opening of the six seals, many others were still hardened in their sins. The judgment of God, revealed and unleashed on the inhabitants of the earth when the sixth seal is broken, had not produced repentance, fear of God, faith in Christ, transformation of life. The same sins of occultism, false worship, idolatry, murders, witchcraft, fornication, and theft continued; the hearts and minds were hardened and confirmed in these abominations more and more.

In this chapter and part of the next, the attention of the Apostle John is for a time turned from the condition of hardened men to this new vision concerning the mystery of God. This parenthetical vision is a pause before the blowing of the final trumpet in Revelation 11:15. John saw a mighty angel coming down from heaven with a little book in his hand. He stood on the land and the sea and announced that there will be no more delay. The mystery of God, which had been declared to God’s servants the prophets, will soon be accomplished, fulfilled and finished. At the end of the chapter John was commanded to eat the sweet-bitter little book and given the mandate to proclaim God’s revelation to “many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE DIVINE MESSENGER OF GOD

Revelation 10:1-4; Exodus 3:2-4; Psalm 97:1,2; Daniel 7:13,14; Ezekiel 1:28; Daniel 10:5,6; Ezekiel 2:9,10; Deuteronomy 11:24,25; Psalm 2:7,8; Ephesians 1:20-22; Isaiah 31:4,5; Deuteronomy 29:29

“And I saw another MIGHTY ANGEL come down from heaven.” Who is this *“mighty angel”*? Investigating the identity of this mighty angel, an author has called us to ‘observe the aspect of this august personage. All the brightness of the sun shines in His countenance and all the rage of the fire burns in His feet. See His apparel. The clouds compose His robe and the drapery of the sky floats upon His shoulders. The rainbow forms His diadem and that which compasses the heaven with a glorious circle is the adornment of His head. Behold His attitude. One foot stands on the ocean and the other rests on the land. The wide extended earth and the world of waters serve as pedestals for those mighty columns. Consider the action. His hand is lifted up to the height of the stars. He speaks and the regions of the firmament echo with the mighty accents as the midnight desert resounds with the lion’s roar. The artillery of the skies is discharged at the signal. A peal of seven-fold thunder spreads the alarm and prepares the universe to receive His orders. To finish all and give the highest grandeur as well as the utmost solemnity to the representation, He swears by Him that liveth forever and ever.’ This is Christ, our Lord and King.

The rainbow upon His head is a picture of His mercy and the remembrance of our covenant-keeping Lord. His feet as pillars of fire - that is the picture of the judgment of God. His face as it were the sun, indescribable glory and brilliance - so glorious that a man could not look upon His face with unshaded, unshielded eyes. Setting His right foot upon the sea and His left foot on the earth is a sign of possession (Deuteronomy 11:24; Joshua 1:3) Christ, our Saviour, Lord, and King is soon to possess all the creation of God, all of earth, land and sea, the whole universe. And He makes a solemn oath and affirmation that the time has come and there will be no more delay.

THE DECLARATION OF THE DELAYED MYSTERY OF GOD

Revelation 10:5-7; Deuteronomy 32:39,40; Ezekiel 20:5,6,15, 16,23,24,42; 36:6,7; Daniel 12:6,7; Nehemiah 9:6; Acts 14:15-17; Romans 11:25-27; 16:25-27; Ephesians 3:3-11

“And the angel (the mighty Angel, Christ) which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven.” Lifting up the hand to heaven was the usual attitude in taking an oath, as if one called heaven to witness. ***“And swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever.”*** The oath, the affirmation, is made in the presence of the ever-living God who is acquainted with the truth of what is affirmed here. ***“Who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein.”*** God is the Creator and Maker of all things in heaven, on the earth, and in the sea; that is, throughout the universe. The Lord, Christ, the Son of God, to whom the Father has given “the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession” affirmed before God, the Creator, the Possessor of infinite power and Who has given the right to rule and control all things, that the time of fulfilment will no longer be delayed.

“But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound” - during the period of time embraced by the events of the seventh trumpet, ***“the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets.”*** Thy mystery of God is the purpose of God which had been concealed, and which had not been fully communicated to man. This mystery, the divine purpose concerning the destiny of the world, the setting up of God’s kingdom, the reign and dominion of Christ on earth, the establishment of righteousness on earth, the overthrow of Satan and all his works, the end of all evil - this mystery had been progressively revealed to the prophets.

DIGESTING AND DECLARING THE MESSAGE FROM GOD

Revelation 10:8-11; Ezekiel 2:8-10; 3:1-4,10,11; Jeremiah 15:16,17; 1:9,10 Isaiah 3:10,11; 2 Corinthians 2:15-17; Jeremiah 25:30-33; Isaiah 34:1-4

The seer, the Apostle John, in the vision was commanded to ***“go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.”*** Given the book, he was commanded ***“eat it up.”*** Eating up a book implies reading, studying, understanding, thoroughly assimilating the contents of the book. We have in common use a somewhat similar phrase, when we speak of ***“devouring a book.”*** ***“And it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.”*** The message in the book will produce a sweet-bitter experience for John and those who are to hear the message.

There is sweetness, joy and delight in receiving and embracing the doctrines in the revelation of God’s Word. Yet, as those who receive the Word with joy begin to live by the Word, persecutions and trouble follow, representing the ***“bitterness”*** that follows the ***“eating”*** of the book.

This part of the vision revealed to John has a very strong resemblance to the account contained in Ezekiel 2:9,10; 3:1-3. The book ***“was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.”*** Whatever joy, or delight John may have when he receives the message of the judgment of the world and the reign of Christ, the delivery and proclamation of divine wrath and fury is a bitter experience - eternal ***“bitterness”*** and suffering for sinners. ***“And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”*** As a consequence of possessing the book of divine revelation and eating and digesting its contents he is now sent and commissioned to proclaim the divine truth to people on earth. As we are favoured to know and experience the truth of God’s Word, we must preach and declare that truth to ***“many peoples”*** - great masses of people, ***“and nations”*** - all countries and continents in the world, ***“and tongues”*** - people of different languages, ***“and kings”*** - and to rulers of the people. Without fear or discrimination, all believers who have received and believed God’s revealed, eternal truth must ***“preach the gospel to every creature.”***

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