

**The Seven Trumpets: an Interpretive Parenthesis**  
**The Little Scroll (Revelation 10:1–11)**  
**By Pastor Jeff Alexander (10/11/2015)**

**Introduction**

1. Chapters ten and eleven are an interpretational interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpet.
2. Chapter ten is John's recommissioning to prophesy.
  - a. The Revelation is divided into two parts: the first is from a heavenly perspective (4–9); the second is from an earthly perspective (11–17).
  - b. John's first commissioning was in 1:1 and 11, and now comes his second commissioning in 9:1 and 11.
3. An important theme of the chapters from the sealing of His servants (7:1–8) to the two witnesses (11:1–14) is the protection of Christians from the spiritual harm revealed in the first six trumpets.
  - a. This sealing will enable the saints to bear tribulation with an enduring witness to the gospel in the midst of great opposition (11:1–13).
  - b. These two witnesses usher in the final trumpet as evidenced in verse 14: "*no more delay*" (10:6).

**I. The Strong Angel**

1. Identification of the strong angel (v. 1)
  - a. His appearance
    - 1) He comes down out of heaven in a cloud, symbolizing *judgment*.
    - 2) He has a rainbow about His head, symbolizing *mercy*.
    - 3) His face is like the sun, symbolizing *holiness*.
    - 4) His feet are like pillars of fire, symbolizing *justice*.
  - b. While the appearance of the angel is similar to that of Christ, it demonstrates only the shared glory of One he serves (Ex. 34:29 *ff*).
    - 1) This is very likely the same strong angel of 5:2, not the Lion of Judah.
    - 2) Angels are spiritual beings that can have a powerful effect on humans (Dan. 10:5–14) but still have limitations.
2. The little book is in the hand of the angel, having been sent from God to John.
  - a. It is very likely that the same information in the scroll opened by the Lamb is now shared with John and the church.
  - b. Thus, the little book serves to link the events revealed in the scroll and John's commission to proclaim them to the churches.
3. Before the scroll is delivered, the angel conveys a solemn oath announcing God's plan of wrath (Amos 3:7, 8). John "*must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings*" (v. 11).
4. The angel's loud cry evokes a response from seven thunders, but God forbids John from revealing their message.
  - a. These thunders represent seven additional judgments, like the seals, trumpets, and bowls.
  - b. Why are they sealed?

- 1) To emphasize the fact that a prophet can only speak what he is authorized to reveal.
- 2) It may mean that these judgments are for a later time as in Daniel 12:9.
- 3) A better idea: these judgments will not be used because God will no longer delay the end. The seventh trumpet will be the last trumpet (1 Cor. 15:52) because God is merciful to his suffering church (Luke 18:7, 8; Matt. 24:22).

## II. The Angelic Oath

1. The conveying of the oath
  - a. The angel's posture: right foot on the sea, left foot on the earth, encompassing all aspects of the creation to whom this message must come
  - b. Right hand raised in witness and commitment (Dan. 12:7; Deut. 32:40)
  - c. The invocation of divine witness: "*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*" (v. 6)
2. The content of the oath
  - a. There is to be no more delay; the end is here.
  - b. The sounding of the seventh trumpet will bring prophetic revelation enacted in history to its final conclusion, launching the final judgment (v. 7 comp. 15:1).
  - c. There is a twofold result: Babylon is destroyed (11:15; 16:17–19) and the New Jerusalem established (11:19; 21:4–6).

## III. The Scroll Eaten

1. John is to take the scroll from the angel and eat it (vv. 8, 9).
  - a. It is both sweet and bitter; just as in Jeremiah 15:16 and Ezekiel 2:8–3:3.
    - 1) The Word of the gospel is *sweet* to those who receive it.
    - 2) It is *bitter* in its rejection both to the witness and those to whom he witnesses (2 Cor. 2:14–16).
  - b. The Word must be eaten—*internalized* by the witness who gives it (John 3:11; Psa. 50:16–18).
2. The message is bitter to John because, from this point, it focuses on the rebellion and delusion of all held captive by the beast and harlot (13:7; 17:15).
  - a. It is a double-edged prophecy concerning nations: "*about many peoples and nations and languages and kings*" (v. 11).
  - b. There is a shift in that "kings" replaces "tribes" as the fourth in the list (compare 5:9 with 10:11).
3. The message is bitter because, although God protects the church from deception, believers will suffer as will be seen in chapter 11.
  - a. This is already happening in the world (Rom. 8:35, 36).
  - b. Nevertheless, while it appears that the church is defeated at the bloodstained hands of its enemies, it is not really defeat but victory (12:11)

## Use

1. The Word of God must effect real change in the life of those who profess Christ through obedience and faithfulness to Christ and His purposes (Acts 1:8).
2. The little scroll is symbolic of the authority given to Christ in seven-sealed scroll of chapter 5. The church possesses this authority in a limited but powerful way (Matt. 16:18, 19).

This authority is in direct conflict to Satan's kingdom on earth and is the sole block keeping him from the realization of his planned New World Order.

3. This conflict involves the mystery of God (v. 7), previously unrevealed truth in the OT and only partially revealed in the NT.

The mystery, in some degree, relates to the plan of God to use suffering and apparent defeat as the means to secure the ultimate victory.

We need to understand this and prepare for it, lest we faint and fall away in the crucial hour.