

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

The Mystery of God, Pt 2

Revelation 10

Keywords: Revelation, prophecy, End Times, Judgment, Mystery, Fulfillment

PowerPoint Presentation included: None

SermonAudio Blurb: In this interlude John brings us new visions and new hope. We see how the plan of God is rapidly coming to fulness and with it the fruition of all His promises. If we see this rightly we see much to hope for and the reason to be found steadfast. God is faithful.

I. Introduction.

- A. There are many moments in your life where something very important takes place and you miss its importance.
 - 1. If you are fortunate at a later time your mind will go back and realize what really was going on.
 - 2. It can be hard things, like hearing your dad say to you that he and your mom are having some problems. Only later did you learn that the marriage was actually done.
 - 3. It can be things that are much bigger than just you. I think about the day the twin towers went down. I remember wondering what was going to happen as a result of it all. I now look at it 16 years later and am still seeing how that event has create and moved this nation along in many troubling ways.
 - 4. Jesus faithfully told his disciples about His need to suffer and die, yet they did not get it. And once they saw it happen they still had no real sense of the hugeness of that event.
 - 5. Jesus tells us that He is preparing a place for us and He will come again and receive us to Himself. Yet how often is that promise in the forefront of your mind?
- B. Last week I introduced this chapter by showing you how it is viewing a huge and wonderful story and truth that is easily overlooked.
 - 1. Read chapter 10.
 - 2. Key verses are 6-7 with the key statements being “. . . there will be delay no longer” and “. . . then the mystery of God is finished. . . .”

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3. I showed you from Genesis to Revelation that there was one key storyline. It is the story of Creation, Ruin, Redemption and Restoration.
 4. I showed you how the message of the Apostles was to persevere and live in light of the “new.” The more you grasp that the more simple much of your life choices become.
- C. Today I want us to now look at this chapter and see the good message it has for all who believe and follow Jesus.
1. Remember, ch 10-11 are describing an interlude, a pause, in the flow of events leading up to the creation of all things new.
 2. This just like how it worked with the seven seals and how it will work with the upcoming seven bowls.
 3. In each of these the last three are separated from the first four. And of those three, there is an interlude.

II. Chapter 10—The Little Book and God’s Mystery.

- A. The angel (1).
1. Another strong angel.
 2. Many think this is a vision of Jesus Christ.
 - a. There are good reasons to reject that:
 - (1) First, he is called “another” angel. *Allos* which emphasizes sameness rather than different.
 - (a) Jesus is not merely an angel and therefore would not be just “another” angel.
 - (b) Back in chapter 5 there was another strong angel mentioned. That one asked the key question of who was worthy to open the scroll.
 - (2) Second, when Jesus is referred to in Revelation he is given a very specific title whereas this one is merely a strong angel.
 - (3) Third, note that this angel swears an oath by invoking the character and being of God. Why would God the Son do that?
 - (4) Finally, you have this angel coming down out of heaven (1) and if that is Jesus then we have another coming of Him other than the one promised.

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- b. What drive this idea though is simply the imagery given.
 - c. Clothed with clouds.
 - (1) Probably refers to judgment. But it also consistently is connected to eschatological events as a whole.
 - (2) Daniel 7:13 — the Son of Man comes with clouds of Heaven. Plus several other examples.
 - d. Rainbow.
 - (1) It would be like a crown or halo.
 - (2) Not certain of the symbolism but it is often stated by commentators that it hearkens back to the flood and is representative of divine mercy.
 - e. Most likely the vision was designed simply to show the greatness of this angel who was sent by God to bring the scroll to John.
 - f. The placing of his feet in this manner is describing total conquest and authority (2).
- B. The book (2).
- 1. Note first that this book, or scroll, is already open.
 - 2. What is this book? There are various ideas but I think the simplest is the best, it is the scroll that was sealed up originally.
 - a. It is open for it is now unfolding the judgments and plans of God.
 - b. And in the imagery given here we have this mighty angel, feet planted firmly over the earth, holding it and crying out with a loud voice.
 - c. It is a fearful time for it shows that what has already happened is not all that there is. They were merely the beginnings.
- C. The revelation that is forbidden (3-4).
- 1. The image of his crying out is one designed to bring fear and trembling. It is a fearsome noise and one of great power.
 - 2. The thunder.
 - a. However they are not merely thunder for they speak and convey information. Possibly another class of angelic beings.

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- b. Again we don't know anything about them.
 - c. What is fascinating is that whatever it was that they said John was forbidden to share. Very similar to 2 Corinthians 12:1-4.
 - d. Lessons:
 - (1) We are dependent upon God for all aspects of revelation. Without Him we have no ability to know.
 - (2) There are things that simply are not ours to know, at least now. And we must be content with this. We are forbidden to practice divination, no matter what it is we call it. We must be very reluctant to not claim to have come to know some supposedly deep mystery.
 - (a) Deuteronomy 29:29.
 - (b) Then Job answered the LORD and said, "I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' "Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." (Job 42:1-3)
 - (c) Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa. 55:6-9)
- D. The revelation that is given (5-7).
- 1. Before the angel gives him the scroll he makes a classic oath.
 - a. Note the content of this oath though for it is revealing. It focuses upon two things: God's eternity and God as creator of all things.

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- b. This is Romans 1:18ff all over again.
 - c. It reveals two of the key points of denial by unbelievers. They seek to deny the person of God and they seek to deny creation.
 - d. Why? For if God exists and God is our Maker, then we are under Him and accountable to Him.
2. The point of this is that there was to be no more delay (6b).
- a. This is another instance of the affirmation of the sovereignty of God. In a way you see in Revelation God rising up in His time and in His way to act as He planned.
 - b. What the seventh angel was to bring about would fulfill the purposes and mysteries of God. All the prophecies of the Old Testament and New Testament would be fulfilled.
 - c. The primary aspect of this mystery would be the establishing of the Kingdom of God.
 - (1) This fits with what is declared right after the blowing of the seventh trumpet in 11:15ff.
 - (2) This is reminiscent of Act 1:6 as well.
 - (3) The gospel involves a proclamation of the Kingdom of God and it is seen right now as a now-not yet idea.
3. What is meant by the “mystery of God?”
- a. The bible speaks of certain things as mysteries. It is not some strange or arcane idea. It simply means that there are things that belong only to God. They are secret things until God chooses to unveil them.
 - b. And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, otherwise they might return and be forgiven." Mark 4:11-12
 - c. For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery-- so that you will not be wise in your own estimation-- that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles

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has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written,
"The deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness
from Jacob." Romans 11:25-26

- d. Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; Romans 16:25-26
 - e. He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. Ephesians 1:9-10
 - f. By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, Ephesians 3:4-6
 - g. the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:26-27
4. When you take these passages together you begin to see that the mystery of God (actually mysteries) will be the summing up of all things to Himself.
- a. So this is the fulness of the plan and program of God. It is the summing up of all things. Everything is resolved.
 - b. It will show His wisdom that was called foolishness.
 - c. It will show His power that was declared to be weakness.
 - d. It will show His sovereignty that what thought to be nothing.
 - e. Questions will cease and all things will be clear.

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- f. He shall reign and the kingdoms of this world shall be rolled up under His Kingdom
- E. The book that is eaten (8-10).
 - 1. Why eat it?
 - a. Reminiscent of Ezekiel 2 where he was told to take a scroll that was written on front and back words of lamentations, mourning and woe.
 - b. Then in chapter 3 he is told to eat the scroll and let it fill his body and then he was commanded to go and speak those words to the people of Israel.
 - (1) Hard words.
 - (2) Words of doom and woe.
 - c. In the same way John is to take and absorb the fulness of what is written there. And then he was to go and speak it.
 - 2. It is sweet.
 - a. This broken, rebellious world is resolved.
 - b. Sin, Satan and Death are destroyed.
 - c. Salvation in the fullest sense of that word is realized.
 - d. It is good. It is sweet.
 - 3. It is bitter.
 - a. It is also a time of great judgment.
 - b. It is the unleashing of the fulness of His judicial wrath.
 - c. Gnashing of teeth will be the norm for those who rejected Him.
- F. The commission (11)
 - 1. He is telling John to go and tell what is to come.
 - 2. He was to proclaim the Kingdom of God.

III. Conclusion.

- A. Lessons learned here:

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1. God is moving in and through history to bring about His purposes.
2. We see He is truly the promise-keeping God who is ever faithful
3. We see that there are things we are not to know and must learn to be content in them.
 - a. How many things do we find anxiety and frustration over simply because we do not know?
 - b. I can only tell you to go and think on God and His works as you know them. He has been always faithful in them so why can you not trust Him in that which he does not reveal?
4. We see that God's word has both a pleasantness and a bitterness to it. The better we embrace both of those realities the better off we will function in our life.
5. We see that every king and people group is under God's authority and care. All shall be addressed and all shall acknowledge His Lordship.

IV. Benediction/Doxology.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Small Group Questions

- **Summer Break**