

THE HEAVENLY CALLING

consider . . . Jesus

Heb. 3:1

VOLUME XXXVI

NORMAN, OKLAHOMA

JULY, AUGUST 2010

NUMBER 4

The Time of the End

Part XVIII

The Opened Scroll

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

And he had in his hand a little book [‘scroll’] open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,

And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand [‘right hand’] to heaven,

And sware by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things that are therein, that there should be time no longer:

But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets (Rev. 10:1-7).

A seven-sealed scroll was introduced in Revelation chapter five, and the re-

sults of the breaking of the seals on this scroll — *ensuing judgments* — were seen throughout events depicted in chapters six, eight, and nine, with events in chapter seven forming an aside (dealing with 144,000 Jewish evangelists and the results of their ministry [ref. ch. 14]).

Then, *the end result of these seals being broken and the scroll being opened up* is seen in events covering all of chapter ten and the latter part of chapter eleven (vv. 15-19). *The whole of the matter* surrounding this scroll being opened and everything being brought to pass within the confines of that seen by the breaking of the seals on the scroll occurred *between the time that the Son took the sealed scroll from His Father’s right hand in chapter five and a mighty angel appeared in chapter ten holding the opened scroll.*

This mighty angel, the seventh and last of the angels to whom seven trumpets were given when the seventh and last seal of the scroll was broken (cf. 8:2; 10:7; 11:15), *brings the entire matter to a close.*

The seven-year Tribulation, along with immediately following events which usher in the Messianic Kingdom, will be over at this point in the book. And events in succeeding chapters (chs. 11a, 12-14, 17--19), along with events back in chapter seven, simply form commentary concerning events occurring during the time of the judgments seen in chapters six, eight, and nine when the seals on the scroll were being broken.

(As seen in previous parts of this series [Parts XV-XVII], events in Rev. 11b, 15, 16 have to do with the judgments of the seven-sealed scroll.)

Thus, the actions of the seventh angel with the opened scroll in chapter ten *brings matters to a close.* And events in conjunc-

tion with his sounding the seventh and last trumpet (with the corresponding seventh and last vial being poured out as well) — could only form what would have to be understood as *the apex* of this closing book in Scripture.

And there is a grandeur to the scene at hand which one needs to simply step back from and allow Scripture to depict. That seen in Revelation chapter ten is the manner which God has chosen to announce the completion of 6,000 years of redemptive work. And this is the manner which God has chosen to “declare the decree” seen in the second Psalm.

Note Ps. 2:5-7 in this respect:

“Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath [speak unto the Gentile nations coming against restored Israel and Israel’s King, in Jerusalem in vv. 1-3], and vex them in his sore displeasure.

Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.

I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee [brought His Son forth in the sense seen in the text, placing Him on the throne in Jerusalem].”

(On the Father *begetting, bringing forth His Son*, in Ps. 2:7, refer to the editor’s book, BROUGHT FORTH FROM ABOVE, for a past similar Divine work relative to Israel and a present similar Divine work relative to Christians.)

All of the Seals Broken

The seven-sealed scroll from chapter five, seen with all the seals broken in chapter ten, contained *the complete redemptive terms for the inheritance, the earth.* There were *no terms* outside of this scroll, and the terms of the scroll had to do with *judgment.*

Within the scope of these redemptive terms, these judgments, there were *three sets of sevens — seven seals, seven*

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trumpets, and seven vials. The seven trumpets formed the judgments of the seventh seal, and the seven vials were seen when the seventh trumpet was sounded. Thus, both the seven trumpets and the seven vials formed the judgments of the seventh seal. Once these judgments had occurred — once the seven trumpets had sounded, and the seven vials had been poured out — *the complete redemptive terms of the scroll had been fulfilled.*

(As previously shown in this series [ref. Parts XV-XVII], the judgments occurring when the seven trumpets sounded and the seven vials were poured out formed different descriptions of *the same judgments*. That occurring when the first trumpet was sounded and the first vial was poured out had to do with *the same judgment*. And so it was with the sounding of the other trumpets and the pouring out of the other vials. That occurring when the vials were poured out simply provided *additional information concerning that occurring when the trumpets were sounded.*

Thus, the sounding of the seven trumpets and the pouring out of the seven vials deal with the same thing and must be studied in the light of one another. And that is especially true when viewing how the whole of the matter is brought to a terminal point, depicted by both the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the pouring out of the seventh vial. Both bring matters to *the same terminal point* [cf. 10:5-7; 11:5; 16:17].)

Note that the judgments associated with the sounding of the seven trumpets were not seen until the seventh seal had been broken, though they formed further descriptions of the same judgments occurring when previous seals were broken.

The same would be true for judgments not seen until the previous fifth and sixth seals of the scroll had been broken, for these judgments formed further descriptions of *the progression of judgments seen occurring when the first four seals were broken*, depicting four horsemen riding forth.

And the breaking of the seventh seal of the scroll provides *exactly the*

same type information that the breaking of the fifth and sixth seals had previously provided. That occurring when this seventh seal is broken provides *additional detail and commentary on that occurring when all of the previous six seals were broken.*

The complete story, covering the whole of the redemption of the inheritance (all seven years of the Tribulation, along with events following Christ's return which lead into the Messianic Kingdom), was told in capsulated form when the four horsemen rode forth. And that occurring when the remaining three seals were broken simply provided *additional detail and commentary already seen through the breaking of the first four seals.*

Then the trumpet and vial judgments *carry this same type relationship to one another.* Though the vial judgments are not seen until the sounding of the seventh trumpet — with the pouring out of these vials not seen in the book until chapters fifteen and sixteen — the latter (the vial judgments) simply provide additional detail and commentary for the former (the trumpet judgments). And *both together* provide additional detail and commentary for that previously seen during the breaking of the first six seals of the scroll.

Beyond that, the trumpet and vial judgments have to do with events brought to pass near the end of and immediately following the Tribulation, at a time when the government of the earth will have been brought into complete disarray. The trumpet and vial judgments, in this respect, would reflect back particularly on events seen when the sixth seal was broken, along with corresponding events occurring near the terminus following the breaking of the first four seals.

(Chapters six through nineteen of this last book in Scripture is structured the same way that the first book in Scripture is structured [along with numerous other books in the O.T.].)

The first thirty-four verses of Genesis [1:1-2:3] relate the complete story of Scripture in capsulated form. Then, the remainder of Scripture is simply commentary — filling in all the details, through numerous ways and means — of that dealt with and foreshadowed in these opening thirty-four verses.

A skeletal framework is set forth at

THE HEAVENLY CALLING

Published bimonthly

The Lamp Broadcast, Inc.

2629 Wyandotte Way
Norman, Oklahoma 73071

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*All unsigned articles are
written by the editor.*

the beginning [Gen. 1:1-2:3]. Then, the subsequent commentary [Gen. 2:4ff] forms all the sinews, flesh, and skin to cover the skeletal framework [cf. Ezek. 37:1-10]. And this commentary is often repetitious, showing the same thing or different things occurring during the same period of time, but all from different vantage points, providing all the different facets of information on the subject which God has deemed necessary.

Beginning immediately following the introductory thirty-four verses in Genesis [with man's creation in 2:7 (cf. 1:26-28)] and continuing into chapter nine, the overall scope of the same thing seen in the preceding thirty-four verses is seen again [creation, ruin, restoration, and rest], but from a different vantage point, with added detail.

Then, beginning with Nimrod's kingdom in chapter ten and continuing into subsequent chapters, the end of that previously seen and dealt with in previous chapters is seen again [covering the same time as seen in Rev. 6-20a].

Then, Gen. 21-25 again covers part of the events previously seen — beginning with events surrounding Calvary and continuing to the Messianic Kingdom 2,000 years later — but from a different vantage point yet, adding more detail.

And matters continue in this manner as one moves through the remainder of Genesis and through other parts of the O.T., with the whole of the O.T. providing a complete word picture of that introduced at the beginning.

Then, in the last book of Scripture, in chs. 6-19, the text is structured *exactly the same way previously seen in the first book of Scripture and elsewhere in the O.T.*

The whole of the matter [the complete time covering the redemption of the inheritance, from the time that the first horseman rides forth in ch. 6 to the battle at the end of ch. 19] is seen in time

covered by events occurring as a result of the breaking of the first four seals, when all four horsemen sequentially rode forth.

Then the remainder forms commentary, drawing extensively from the O.T., providing the sinews, flesh, and skin to cover the skeletal framework established when the first four seals were broken. And this commentary, as in Genesis, is often repetitious, showing the same thing or different things occurring during the same period of time, but all from different vantage points, providing all the different facets of information which God has deemed necessary.

Some things about the preceding have been dealt with in past parts of this series and, of necessity, will be dealt with in future parts as well. Attention is called to this structure somewhat at length at this point in the series because of the subject matter in Revelation chapter ten — taking the reader to the same point as seen in the opening verses of chapter twenty.)

Thus, understanding how the Book of Revelation is structured in this respect is *crucial* for a correct understanding of this closing book of Scripture. Understanding this structure will explain how the judgments depicted by the pouring out of the seven vials, though not seen until the seventh trumpet sounds (chs. 10, 11), and not seen being poured out until later chapters in the book (chs. 15, 16), can have to do with the judgments occurring when each of the seven trumpets sounds (chs. 8-11).

The vial judgments simply form additional commentary for the trumpet judgments. And both together form additional commentary for that already seen when the previous six seals of the scroll were broken.

Action of the Mighty Angel

The action of the seventh angel is expressed in chapter ten in connection with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which brings *the mystery of God* to a completed or finished state — *a full disclosure* of that seen as *a mystery* up to this point in time. And this is brought to pass through *a full revelation* (*a full disclosure*) of *God's Son* (Rev. 1:1), *fully revealing the Father* (Rev. 10:7; cf. John 14:8, 9), which necessitates a completion of everything seen in the Book of Revelation up to and including events

occurring at the time of Christ's return in the latter part of chapter nineteen.

Then, the same thing is seen in chapter sixteen, though from a different perspective, by a seventh angel pouring out the seventh vial of wrath (v. 17). This act is expressed in the chapter by a great voice coming out of the temple in heaven saying, "It is done [*lit.*, 'It has been finished'].¹" This is the translation of a perfect tense in the Greek text, indicating *action completed* in past time, which exists during present time in a *finished state*.

Everything will have been completed at this point in time. *The inheritance* will have been redeemed, *the bride* will have become the Lamb's wife, and *the sceptre* will have changed hands. *Satan* can now be bound and be cast into the abyss, and *the Messianic Era* can be ushered in.

At this point in time, for the first time in the history of the earth, that seen in chapter ten can occur.

1) The Transfer of Power

The matter concerning *the kingdom of this world* (a kingdom which has been under Satan's dominion and control since time preceding man's creation) *becoming that* "of our Lord, and of his Christ" is clearly stated *in a symbolic manner* in chapter ten (vv. 1-7); then it is clearly stated again *in so many words* in the next chapter, when the sounding of the seventh trumpet (with the corresponding pouring out of the seventh vial) is repeated (11:15-19).

In chapter ten, at the completion of all the judgments connected with the breaking of the seven seals on the scroll from chapter five, a "mighty angel" comes down from heaven, holding this scroll (an angel clothed with "a cloud," "a rainbow" on his head, his face shining "as it were the sun," and his feet appearing as "pillars of fire"). And at this point in the book, Christ will have broken *all* of the seals; and *all* of the judgments connected with the breaking of these seals will have come to pass.

The whole of the matter will be over when this "mighty angel," holding the scroll, comes down from heaven and places "his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth [*indicating complete dominance and control of the redeemed inheritance, possession*]" (cf. Dan. 7:13, 14).

(*A rainbow* is seen two times in the Book of Revelation [4:3; 10:1]. The rainbow, as first seen in Scripture in Gen. 9:13-16, appeared *following the storm*. And the rainbow is used after a similar manner, in relation to *judgment*, in the Book of Revelation. It is seen surrounding God's throne in chapter four in connection with *a past judgment of Christians* [chs. 1-3]; and it is seen in ch. 10 on the head of the "mighty angel" who sounds the seventh trumpet, in connection with *a past judgment of Israel and the nations*.

In both instances, *judgment will be over*. Through the first judgment, *the bride* will have been made known [chs. 1-3]; and, through the second judgment, *Israel* will have been brought to the place of repentance, *the inheritance* will have been redeemed, and *the bride* will have become the Lamb's wife [chs. 6-19].)

This "mighty angel," holding the scroll with all of the seals broken, standing upon the sea and the land, cried with "a loud voice, as when a lion roareth" (cf. Rev. 5:5), resulting in "seven thunders" being heard (an apparent reference to the seven vial judgments [chs. 15, 16], which will also be fulfilled at this time).

Then this angel "lifted up his hand [Gk., 'right hand'] to heaven" (evidently the hand holding the opened scroll, with all of the seals broken [cf. Rev. 5:1, 7], showing the One in heaven that the entire matter has been finished [cf. vv. 2, 5-7]); and he swore by the One Who liveth throughout all of the ages, Who had created all things, that there should be "time no longer" (v. 6b).

("Time" [Gk., *chronos*] in v. 6 should not be translated "delay," as in some translations. The reference is to *the completion of time allotted to man*. Time in relation to this allotted time will no longer exist.

Some expositors and Bible students have understood the "mighty angel" in ch. 10 to be *Christ Himself* — because of his description [v. 1], the fact that he is the one holding the scroll with all of the seals broken [v. 2a], and his resultant action [vv. 2b-6].

Contextually though, this does not appear to be the case. Note in Rev. 8:1, 2 that Christ [v. 1] is seen occupying a separate position from any of the seven angels to whom God gives the seven

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trumpets [v. 2]. This angel [the seventh angel], if he is to be identified, is probably the “strong [or, ‘mighty’] angel” introducing the seven-sealed scroll in Rev. 5:2, now providing *an open show of Deity on behalf of Another, as he stands upon the sea and the land, holds the scroll with the seven broken seals up toward the heavens, and claims the redeemed inheritance — the kingdom — for Christ.*

Note that angels acting under fixed laws are so closely connected with Deity that their actions become those of the Lord.

For example, in Gen. 18, 19, the Lord, accompanied by two angels, came down to earth and appeared to Abraham “in the plains of Mamre” [Gen. 18:1ff]. The Lord had come down *to see for Himself* if that which He had heard about things occurring in Sodom and Gomorrah was correct [though, in His omniscience, the Lord already knew; this is simply the manner in which matters of this nature are sometimes presented in Scripture].

But, though the Lord said, “I will go down, *and see...*” [with Sodom and Gomorrah mentioned], the two angels accompanying the Lord are the only ones who went on down into the plain to view that which was occurring in these cities, which they did through entering into Sodom. The Lord, throughout this time, remained out in the high country with Abraham. [18:20-22].

Then there is the matter of *the destruction of the cities of the plain.* The two angels told Lot, “For we will destroy this place... the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.” But Scripture goes on to state, “Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven” [19:13, 24].

How did the Lord go down into Sodom, as He said that He would, if He remained in the high country with Abraham? As well, how did the Lord destroy the cities of the plain [four cities (Deut. 29:23)] — something clearly stated — when the angels, at a prior time, had also clearly stated that the Lord had sent them to perform this destruction?

The answers to both questions are the same and are quite simply. *The actions of angels acting under fixed laws become the actions of the Lord.* By the angels going down in this manner, the Lord went down; by the angels destroying the cities of the plain in this manner, the Lord destroyed these cities [cf. Deut. 33:2; Ps. 68:17; Acts 7:53].

This is the manner in which the Lord, through angels, presently governs the whole of the universe. This is also the manner in which the Lord, through man, will govern this earth during the Millennium and rule beyond this earth out in the universe during the ages following the Millennium. The Lord, throughout this time, will continue to govern the whole of the universe, *in an unchanged manner* [Gen. 1:26-28; Job 1:6, 7; 2:1, 2; Rev. 3:21 (man’s rule beyond the Millennium will be dealt with in a later article in this series)].

Thus, since the actions of angels acting under fixed laws become actions of the Lord as well, in one respect it is immaterial whether the angel seen in Rev. 10 is viewed as an angel or as the Lord. *The end result would be the same. Either way, actions would be those of the Lord; and either way, these actions would be no more or no less the Lord’s actions.*

2) The Scroll, Bitter and Sweet

Then, the end of the matter — John taking the scroll out of the angel’s hand and eating it (vv. 8-10) — is explained by both the context and that seen in the counterpart to this passage in Ezek. 2:8-3:4. A scroll is taken and eaten in both passages (though not a redemptive scroll in Ezekiel), with *sweetness* resulting in both instances. And, contextually, in both passages, this can only have to do with *Israel ultimately being brought to the place of repentance* (cf. Ezek. 36-39; Rev. 12, 17-19a).

The *bitterness* seen in Rev. 10:9, 10 is seen in Ezekiel by continuous references to *Israel’s unrepentant condition.* Then, both books end the same way — *with the nation’s repentance, referred to as sweetness; and with the Messianic Era ushered in.*

a) Unrepentance, Repentance

The complete story of Israel — *in the nation’s unrepentant state, followed by the nation’s repentance* — is seen time after time in the Old Testament, beginning with Moses, continuing in the Psalms, and ending in the Prophets.

The Book of Revelation, in this respect, doesn’t present anything new at all. Rather, the Book is simply *an opening up and unveiling of that previously seen throughout numerous parts of the Old Testament.*

Isaiah begins his prophecy in this manner, presenting Israel in this unrepentant state (1:4ff); but he then calls attention to a future day when repentance will occur, with the Messianic Kingdom being ushered in (1:25-2:5). And, at the outset, this tells the reader what Isaiah’s prophecy is about.

Jeremiah’s prophecy is structured after a similar fashion. The first part of the prophecy has to do centrally with Israel’s condition in the nation’s unrepentant state (chs. 1-29). But then matters change, and the Lord begins to tell His people what He will one day do following their repentance (chs. 30, 31).

Ezekiel’s prophecy, as has been shown, is also structured the same way, which is characteristic of all the Prophets.

And one could only expect the Book of Revelation to be structured the same way, which is *exactly* what is seen in this book.

b) The Rainbow

There is *a rainbow* in connection with God’s throne and Glory in Ezek. 1:26-28 which depicts exactly the same thing as the rainbow on the angel’s head in Rev. 10:1.

This rainbow, in both places, anticipates *the sweetness* seen in both passages, not the bitterness. This rainbow anticipates that seen in Ezek. 3:3 and Rev. 10:9, 10. And that depicted by the rainbow in both passages, in turn, is seen realized at the end of both books (cf. Ezek. 40-48; Rev. 20a).

— To be Continued —

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