

Emmanuel Bay

"THE SWEET BITTER BOOK"

Rev. 10

INTRODUCTION:

To tie our thinking together, you remember in the 13th verse - Chapter 8, we had following that last trumpet and eagle warning -- flying in mid-Heaven. Now, this says an angel - but the best translation and the best manuscripts - it says, "I looked and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice. As he flew in mid-Heaven, woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth." At the blast of the other trumpets, which the three angels are about to blow.

In Chapter 9 - we discovered the fifth trumpet in those first dozen verses. In which an angel came and John saw a fallen star, Satan, who was given the key. And he unlocked the bottomless pit - and out of that shaft came smoke. Symbolic of Sodom and Gomorrah. Gen. 19:24.

And a plague of locust in those verses, began to torment those who were upon the earth. Commanded not to eat up the green grass or the trees.

And for five months, they were given the duration of punishment. However, those sealed on the foreheads with the seal of God were not touched. A description of the locust was given in detail. With even a ruler leading them.

The last verses - 13 to the end of Chapter 9 - the sixth trumpet sounded. And we find that during that time, the prayers of the saints were being offered. And four angels were seen bound at the River Euphrates. And they were prepared to come.

And kill a third of mankind.

They formed a great Army. 200 million horsemen came down with all the power of judgment. So the purpose of the judgement of the sixth trumpet was to call men to repentance. However, men did not respond in V. 21 and 22 - they paid no attention to it. Some even wanted to die - but could not die.

Now look - Chapter 10. This is the second interlude - that is, set in here between the sixth and the seventh seal. And this is like unto that one - between the sixth and the seventh trumpets. Both of these interludes were designed to comfort the people of God. And bring some kind of comfort to God's people in the midst of troubled times. Indeed, today, there never has been a time when God's people - and some of you sitting here need to hear something of what God has to say about comfort for your heart and life.

There are several things here - this is full of instruction. Regarding and connecting with future events. Truth is of moral character. We might likely read this book or this passage and pass over it without careful attention. It does not seem at first sight - to have to do with any great movements. Or consider any connections with Israel or the Gentiles.

But during this interlude - we are going to find that here is some encouragement and some comfort to God's people in a dark, and in a burning earth. We would think from the progress and the development of evil, that the ultimate king of this earth is Satan. That evil will overthrow like a flood. But this interlude is to remind us that God is still sovereign.



So the progress of the trumpet judgement is here interrupted. And the great burden of this angel and his message is -- that there shall delay no longer.

There are three things that I might divide this chapter up to help remember it - and also to help analyze it. First, a strong angel. V. 1-3. Second, seven thunders. V. 4-7. And third, a sweet bitter book. V. 8-11.

### I. A STRONG ANGEL

V. 1 - The description here of the angel shows great dignity of this Heavenly messenger who comes with all of God's Glory. Which is reflected in him coming down from Heaven. It indicates that he is God's messenger. And he is stated to be a (strong) angel. This is a tremendous description. As he comes and takes his place. John sees him and angels elsewhere have been messengers. And I think the same seems to be true here. He has in his hand a small open book. He stands with one foot on the land and one on the sea - to indicate that he has a message, for the whole world. And, he cries with a loud voice. He plants his right foot on the sea, his left foot on the earth. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished. But as here the glad tidings of triumph - this is beyond any literature in all of the world in its description.

*John Was Watching Harbours Feet + unbelievably the Worker angel [foot on Elys River  
Rainbow - " " Garby St.]*

I read an account in which someone else has eloquently paid tribute to this (majestic angel) coming down.

First, the aspect of this person. All the brightness of the sun shines in his

countenance. And all the rage of the fire burns in his feet.

See his apparell - the clouds compose his robe. And the drapery of the sky floats upon his shoulders.

The rainbow forms a crown. That which compasses the Heavens of the glorious circle about his head.

Behold his attitude - one foot stands on the ocean and the other foot rests on the land. Wide extended earth and world - serve as a mighty column, and support.

Consider the action - his hand is lifted up to the height of the stars. And his voice echoes with a mighty accent. As the midnight desert, with the lions roar.

There is a peel of seven thunders. That spread an alarm and prepare those to receive their orders. He swears by him that liveth. Forever and ever.

Is not that terrific. I do not know who wrote those words. Or who the author might have been. But that man must have known something, about this chapter.

The mighty angel came down from Heaven. Heaven, and he comes clothed with the cloud. It is a picture of majesty - a rainbow about his head. With feet as pillars of fire. A picture of the judgement of God. As the pillar of fire in the wilderness.



Which led the children of Israel by night. So here the representative of the very throne of God - with the power of judgement in the earth. His feet as burning pillars of fire. And the rainbow about his head, that causes his face to shine as the sun. How brilliant and so glorious. That he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the earth. And he swears by him that liveth forever and ever. That there should be delay no longer. That now the time has come when God shall take unto himself the great power and reign over the earth. It is a portrayal that the scholars say -- this is the great angel and some say, that it resembles the Lord Jesus himself. That may be true. That may be a description of Jesus, our glorious Lord.

*He may have been "Angel of Time"*

It may be the picture of an ambassador to come and represent God. He swears by the Lord in the book of Genesis. Because God could not swear by anybody greater than himself. By his own name.

V. 12 - With his foot on the sea and foot on the land - it affects the whole world. Not partial. But John now sees himself as an actor in the great drama which is taking place. He is himself drawn into this. As he looks and he takes possession. For example, when a man sets his foot on something - that means he is in possession of it. For example in the 11th chapter in Deut. God said, "every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread - that shall be yours. No man shall be able to stand before you." The Lord God shall lay the fear of you upon all the people around about. And every place where you shall tread - upon that, shall be yours.

The same word is repeated - (Josh. 1.) As I said to Moses, my servant, every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that shall I give you.

In this verse, when the angel set his foot down on the sea and the earth, that he was possessing things for the Lord God.

This mighty angel could be the angel of the covenant. The one standing beside the golden altar acting as the angel priest in that sanctuary - offering the prayers of the people before God.

It is clothed, not merely with the cloud, but the cloud as we read is a symbol of divine glory. The cloud is a chariot in which he led his people. All through the wilderness - all the way to the land of promise. When Solomon built the temple and dedicated it - God came down in a cloud and dwelt in his house. This is a visible presence of Jehovah - right in the midst of Israel. And John saw this and he saw the rainbow around about the throne which was evidence that God had said to Noah that I will not destroy the world again by flood. His face was like the sun - this Saul discovered on his march to Damascus. On the turnpike that day, his heart was filled with hatred, but he fell to the earth with the light of the brightness of the sun.

In V. (2) - there was in his hand a little book opened. And what this book might be - it seems to me, it could be no other than the very book that we have had before us heretofore. It is the title deed to the earth, the seals of which have been broken, one after another.

In V. (3) - He sounds the voice of a conqueror - the lion roars. And Judas tried - typical of the lion. But one in the same. And when he had cried other things, are going to take place.



Before I move to the next section - this shows the distinct providence of God. Even the dead are going to be judged. That the sea will give up the dead which are in it. And the human dead - that are held by death, are given up. Now, what the sea covers - no man knows. The human remains are covered by its depth. But this too will be covered by judgement. And he cries, as a lion roars.

## II. SEVEN THUNDERS

V. 4 - The Bible says, 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.

The seven thunders symbolize the thorough Heavenly testimony. Remember John has forcefully been impressed. By visions of horsemen, and by vision of the six trumpets, of God's judgement. And the spiritual forces that lie behind this. And he is receiving now a commission now that he must learn that his knowledge of God is incomplete. That the inner man needs council and human ears need to be opened to the truth.

And whatever the thunder said, it was not to be recorded. Dan. 12:4, 2 Cor. 12:4.

A voice from Heaven stopped him - he says I was about to write. And John was instructed to carry this in - this message to the grave. We do not know what these voices of God said. Now we know the type of seven thunders - they are not just seven thunders. They are the seven thunders in each instance. According to the language here - that each thunder is very positive. Very emphatic. They are not just a crash

of lightning. But they are the voices of the judgement of God. And we find those things referred too - always to a reference of the Almighty.

They are seven in number, which represents the fact that the fullness and the completeness of the intervention of God in human history is about to take place. God has a plenty of judgement to offer.

They are not called seven in the first vision - in Chapter 4. But they are called seven here. In keeping with the characteristic number. Seven lamps, seven spirits, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven viles, seven thunders. Fullness of the pronouncement, of God. And when those seven thunders responded to the voice of this mighty strong angel, representative from Heaven, John was about to write what they said. And there was a message from Heaven to write them not - but to seal them up. Now what could that mean.

Why mention the words if he is not going to reveal them to us. Why leave us in suspense. Why make us wonder about the voice here.

I think there is a lesson to each of us - there is a great broad outline of the future revealed by our Lord. All through the Scripture especially what has been written by Paul and here by John. There are principles and forces that work in history that are really unknown to us. They are known to God. That is why no man with accuracy can predict the future. I mean, put it on a chart, and lay it out for you. Because he does not know and he does not understand all of the forces that work behind the incidents that make up human history.



We cannot really with accuracy know all about the future. These things are known to God. And this morning, some of you literally have thousands of questions about the days we live in. Or the days that are yet to come - to which I cannot and you cannot find all of the answers.

*Prob. for the Mental Activity are undoubtedly between ages 4-15.  
at 4 we know all the Questions:  
at 15 " " " " Answers.*

There are men who have given their lives to nothing but the study of the word of God. And some of them have no idea as to what the answer to some of these questions might be, about the dead, about life to come, and about a thousand things over there in eternity. That are out beyond. Paul said, we only see through a glass darkly. But we do not know, we shall never know until the hour that they are revealed to us. God has kept many things secret in his own wisdom. Many things are kept hidden.

Now had God willed that we know them, he would have said to John, why don't you write these down and record these. But he said, seal them up. Write them not.

Even Daniel, the beloved prophet said, Lord, I hear Thy voice. I see the vision. But I do not understand what the words mean and I do not understand the vision. What does it mean. And God said to Daniel, go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed til the time of the end.

V. 5 - And the strong angel standing on the sea and upon the earth.

V. 6 - Lifted his hand to Heaven and he swore by him that liveth for ever and ever. Who created Heaven and the things that are in Heaven. And with a solemn oath, he said, that there should be time no longer.

Think about that. That is something as he swore by God in Heaven, that there would be time no longer. Time is a creation of God. Like this world of matter and of life. For God, there is no such thing as time with God. It is just for us. And God looks upon all the ages as present. He can see it here - he can see it there. And he can see the end from the beginning. All of this is under the review of God's eyes. We, who are creatures, see things happening a day at a time. Events by the hour. We divide things up by years. And a year by 365 days. And we divide the day up into 24 hours. We divide the hour up into 60 minutes. We divide time - but God looks upon it as a whole and a complete creation. And this present creation of time is for man. Now this refers to man's day and man's hour. Now the angel lifted up his hand to Heaven. In that final moment, when a man's days are ended and time shall be no longer, when the delay of the mystery of God shall cease, what an amazing thought. It ought to bring a man to his knees. As in humbleness he faces the great day when God Almighty - some day shall say, that there shall be no time. It will be cut off.

V. (7) - This expression - the mystery of God is here stated. But the days of the voice of the seventh angel - when shall bring the sound - the mystery of God, shall be finished.

The mystery of God, that is the mystery of God's long tolerance of evil, will be finished. The mystery of the struggle between light and darkness - good and evil. All of this will be explained.

Are you sometimes troubled with the question as to God's purpose. Or God's judgement. Or the strange dealings with you in this world. We need to learn from the Scriptures and wait with patience and God will make this part clear unto us.



All of this that man does not understand. The connections of God's dealings with him.

This text reads the mystery of God is with the long delay of our Lord in taking the Kingdom unto himself, and establishing righteousness in the earth. Sin and death seem to have their day. There is no village, no town, no little country place where there is not one heart that is without its dark black spot. There is no life without its tears and its sorrows. There is no home that ultimately does not break up and there is no family that does not see the circle of the home dissolved with death and the grave. There is no life that does not see somehow that there is coming death - some noteable man the other day said, as he scribbled a note - "I never really thought that I would die." But the pages of history tell us that the first murder comes even until this hour. And there is a mystery as to why God delays. And why does God know all of this. Is he indifferent to it. Is he able to do something about it. Agnostics laugh at us. Unbelievers make fun of us. Missionaries are slain. Our churches sometimes have hardships.

But somewhere beyond the starey skies, there stands a herald angel with a trumpet in his hand, and by the decree of the Lord God Almighty - there is a day, an hour, and a moment, that has been selected. And a time when that angel shall sound and the Kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdoms of our God and of His Christ.

Someday, there will be the last victim. God will say to Satan - this is your last destruction. God will say to evil - this is your last effort. God will say to sin - this is your last waste and damnation and evil that is as broad. That rolls in from the river Euphrates. Each generation receives from generation to generation, the terrible inheritance of iniquity. And judgement passed on to our children's children.

And the flood tide goes on forever. And sin goes on forever. And death reigns forever and the grave is filled forever. And God says, there is a boundary. There is going to be a dyke put up - and evil is going to be right and ready. And Satan is going to be over-thrown. And when all of this happens, God is going to be behind this darkness and this tragedy. When God's people give themselves to holy purposes - these tragedies are going to somehow lead to ultimate victory. This is part of the mystery of God.

Did you know that always in the message of the prophet - there are good tidings that can be announced. But even though the prophets who sees the glorious day dawning, and his faith is flooded with the glory of the everlasting hills, and he preaches the good tidings. But the final triumph is not yet. The day has been delayed.

In Matt. 24 - he used a parable by saying, my Lord delayeth his coming. He is not going to come. We are not going to see him. But again in the 36th verse of the same chapter, but of that day and hour, knoweth no man, no - not the angels of Heaven, but only my father only.

In Matt. 25 - the virgins - some foolish, some wise. And yet, when the promise of his coming arrives. All things seem to continue as they were from the beginning of creation. And people ask questions - and every generation somehow thinks that God is going to intervene. Eve gave birth to Cain and probably thought that here was a great promised seed. That is going to bruise Satan's head. When John the Baptist preached, I introduce to you Jesus, and he is going to lay the axe to the root of the tree. He is going to divide the sheep from the goats. And John felt Judgement Day would soon be there.



III. THE SWEET BOOK - V. 8-11

V. 8 - And the voice which I heard from Heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. John here is involved personally in taking hold of this little book. He is commissioned. He is an actor. In the drama of life here, in the development. The Greek word for book is biblos. Our word Bible comes from it. And so, to me, we look at these books and in the hand of the Lord God we see this little book that is here to be taken. It is open in this 8th verse. The little book, the one which is open, is very emphatic. It must have had reference as to what had gone before. The little book that lay in the hand of God was sealed. With seven seals. But now in this 10th chapter - all seven of these seals have been broken. And the whole of the little book is open - and it is the same little book. That little book in the hand of God sealed - represents a forfeited inheritance. And it represents the redemption. And it represents the casting out of Satan. And the creation of this world was not for Satan but was for us. And the children of Adam, as each seal is opened, we find that God cast out this dragon. And each seal is broken, and finally the book is in full view. And in this broad outline we see that God is redeeming his lost creation.

V. 9 - John is instructed to go and take the little book from the angel and he receives it with further assurance that he is to take and eat it - and it shall make thy belly bitter and thy mouth as sweet as honey.

Here is a simple symbol - he is to take and eat it up. Assimilate - to digest. Righting your soul. Jeremiah said 15:16 - oh Lord thou knowest thy words were found and I did eat them.

Ezekiel Chapter 3:1, 3 - The Lord said open thy mouth. And eat that I give Thee. And I looked and behold, a hand was sent unto me, and lo a roll of the book lay thereon spread before me. And it was written within and without. And there was written Lamentations - mournings and woe. And the Lord said, son of man, eat this book. Eat this roll and then go and speak. "I opened my mouth and ate the roll, and it was in my mouth, sweet as honey. But, it was filled with Lamentations and mournings. And woe.

So the language here is taken from Ezekiel. That helps you to understand it. The prophet was deliberately commissioned to eat the scroll, or the roll. And then to go and witness with his message.

V. 10 - He says I took the little book and ate it up. And in my mouth - it was as sweet as honey. But in my stomach, it was bitter. John's commission was that he was personally involved in presenting this to the people. However, he soon found that the sweet message in his mouth became bitter after he had eaten it. The mercies and judgements of God are included in the same message. And it is like a sharp edged sword.

*Boy Eating Green Apples - Juicy -  
But Oh! When Hit The Stomach - What Bitter! Choking!  
Then you Doubt!*

We are to experience and then we are to testify. We are to study, meditate, learn, and then we are to preach. We are to consume God's word. Then we are to prophesy. John was to eat the book and then prophesy before the people, the nations, and this earth. So John did, he took the word of God, he took the Revelation and he ate it. And in his mouth it was like honey, but in his stomach - it was like bitter gull.



What a profound truth. A bitter and sweet book.

Do you see the truth - that we might be warned, that we might be saved, but have the Word of God from Heaven - it is sweet like honey. Possess God's Scriptures - it is like sugar. To turn aside from God's message - that is exactly what is written here. All the blessings of God - how sweet they are. People who refuse God's admonitions, the words are going to be bitter gull.

Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up - in his vision. It was glorious. But then he says, woe is me. Then he listened to the message that God asked him to deliver. Except these people awake, except they turn, they will be destroyed. And when God described the destruction, Isaiah said - how long, oh Lord, how long? The Lord said until the whole thing be destroyed. The vision of God was sweet - but the words were bitter.

In the (2 Kings 22) - the Scribes found the book of God in the house of the Lord. And when the King heard this - he saw the judgement, he rent his clothes, and he wept before God saying, oh how great is thy wrath. And the judgements of God that are kindled against us. These blessings are sweet. But the judgement is bitter.

Every message of hope and glory, of salvation and goodness, has great promise. And we see the sweetness beyond.

But if you reject it - there is certain judgement. And this sweetness turns to bitterness. Yes, Jesus is as sweet as honey. Someday Satan is to be defeated. Someday in Jesus, God will triumph. Someday there will be no more darkness, sin, and misery.

And oppression and death.

We love our Lord who forgave our sins. He died for us on the cross. The message is as sweet as honey. But oh that, is why God's children weep when they pray. That is why a family sometimes will lament over a prodigal son or a wayward daughter. And that is why the church gives itself to prayer meetings and intercession before God.

The judgement of God is going to be as bitter as gall. But the marvelous Christian is going to have hope. And it is going to be sweet.

In V. 11 - We read, and he said unto me, Thou must prophesy. Before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings. Well, the faith of the people will be involved. And how tragic that here is a prophet who has to deliver - go and deliver this message. The people ought to be warned. And God has a message that will warn them. And to encourage them.

*Two Features of this incident (1) - The Book was given to human hands - (2) - Thus Received & Becomes a Personal experience -*

And his commission is simply to preach God's judgement to the men who have rejected him. And the content of this book has to do with matters of sorrow and of woe which is true in Ezekiel 2:8ff. And as John delivered it - he said, woe unto God's judgement. Woe unto Christians out here in the hands of the enemies. Woe unto the church in great conflict with the great power of Rome. And he ate the book and he mastered the message. Then he made it a part of himself. There was sweetness in the joy of receiving the revelation from God. Every preacher knows this joy, every Christian here this morning feels in his own heart, this great joy. The sweetness, the promise, the glory of knowing that you are right with God.

*Blowman overtakes The naper  
Hope as traded him and seed -*

But there are those today who feel the bitterness, that comes. In the delivery



of God's message. The condemnation upon their sins. No matter how much John knew and how much he studied it - men were under God's wrath. They must be punished. And it was bitterness and sorrow and dreadful in its consequences.