Today we have come to the interlude before the seventh trumpet is blown and the kingdoms of man come to an end. We come knowing that there is a promise of blessing to those who read this book and keep its sayings $(1:3^i)$, and yet at the same time knowing that it is a difficult book to interpret, and that there are many different views regarding the meaning and application. The views I share are just a few among many. We need the Holy Spirit to help us see how we can apply it to our lives today and to receive the warnings and the promises.

¹ Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. ² He had a little scroll open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, ³ and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring. When he called out, the seven thunders sounded. ⁴ And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down." Revelation 10:1-4 Just as there was a pause at the seventh seal (8:1ⁱⁱ), so now there is a pause before the seventh trumpet. An angel whose description is similar to the description of Jesus in the first chapter descends from heaven. Luke 21:27ⁱⁱⁱ tells us Jesus will return in a cloud (Daniel 7:13^{iv}). Clouds remind Jewish readers of God descending on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19:9^v). Legs as pillars of fire may be meant to recall the pillar of fire that led the children of Israel by night through the wilderness. God led with Israel in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night (Exodus 13:20-22^{vi}). This passage reminds us of both.

The rainbow is very significant. The rainbow after the great flood was a sign of God's promise to those He had just brought through His judgments on and evil world (Genesis $9:12-16^{vii}$). Ezekiel tells us there is a rainbow around the throne and described the glory of the Lord appearing as a man with legs of fire (Ezekiel $1:26-28^{viii}$). Further connecting this being with God is the Greek having a definite article before rainbow, "the rainbow." Which rainbow is that referring to? We look back to Revelation $4:3^{ix}$ and see it is *the* rainbow around throne of God. The angel's face shone like the sun is almost identical to the wording about Jesus in $1:16^x$ and on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew $17:2^{xi}$).

The Angel of Lord in the Old Testament is sometimes referred to as YHWH. I believe it is a way to describe the preincarnate Christ (Colossians $1:15^{xii}$). It may be that He is here referred to as an angel as He was in the Old Testament. Further connecting this angel as the Angel of the Lord is the description of His voice like a lion roaring. In chapter 5 verse 5^{xiii} we read that Jesus comes forth as the lion of the tribe of Judah.

God descending on Sinai in a cloud, the rainbow of promise, the reference to pillars of fire, and the lion all seem to point the reader to the power of God to see us through this fallen world with the help of the Word made flesh (John $1:14^{xiv}$). That is how I think the first readers would have taken it. I think it is the way readers since that time can take it. Certainly, those who come to faith during *the* great tribulation will find solace in it as well.

Though the descriptions are associated with Christ, *It is possible that the angelic figure of Revelation 10:1 is merely an angelic representative of Christ who therefore*

possesses Christ's traits. If so, Michael would be a good candidate, since he represents Christ in 12:7–9^{xv}. Some think that the heavenly being... is Gabriel, whose name means strong man of God.^{xvi} There are two other strong or mighty angels in Revelation. Carson argues that it cannot be Jesus as Jesus would not swear by the one who lives forever and ever because one main point in Revelation is the oneness of the One on the throne and the Lamb. He believes that swearing by the Father may implies a disjunction between the two. We can say that this one certainly comes as a representative of God.^{xvii}

John is telling us that this angel is going to lead the people of God to the new and better promised land, the new heavens and new earth. A similar idea is also communicated by the mention of the "rainbow over his head." We know about rainbows from Genesis 9, where we read that God saved Noah through the judgment of the world, and when Noah got off the ark in land newly brought forth out of the waters, God gave him the rainbow as a sign of his covenant. Those themes of God saving through judgment and giving the redeemed a new heavens and new earth are recalled by this rainbow over the angel's head. What God did for Noah and the children of Israel by saving them through the judging of their enemies, then bringing them into a new land, he is going to do again when he saves us through the judgment of this world and brings us into the new heavens and new earth.^{xviii}

The little scroll in the angel's hand had to be small enough for John to eat. (See verse 10.) In verse 11 it seems to define the contents as the following prophecies in Revelation, chapters 11 through 16. Chapter 17 begins with a new vision. But it may be the new vision in 17 is a part of this little scroll as well.

Some commentators identify it with the scroll Jesus received in chapter 5 now opened. There are many parallels in the language of chapters 5 and 10. Either way, this scroll contains the judgments of God on this world and those who live for it and also the salvation and completion of the bride of Christ. Beale sees it as a little version of the big scroll in which Christ gave Himself as a sacrifice for our sins to be worthy to open the seals. In miniature form, we give ourselves as living sacrifices that we might have a part in God's kingdom (Romans $12:1^{xix}$).

Standing with a foot on land and one in the sea perhaps indicates the message he brings is for the whole earth. Placing one's foot on something meant sovereignty over it (Joshua 10:24-26^{xx}). With legs like pillars of fire on the earth and sea would then indicate that he is bringing judgment on the whole earth.

When the angel calls out with that lion like roar (Amos $1:2^{xxi}$; $3:8^{xxii}$), the seven thunders sound out. This is a metaphorical way to say that a heavenly being spoke $(6:1^{xxiii}; 19:6a^{xxiv})$. In Psalm $29:3^{xxv}$ the voice of God is said to thunder. But John is forbidden to write what they declared. Instead, a voice from heaven tells him to seal up their saying. That is similar to Paul being told not to relate what he had heard in a heavenly vision (2 Corinthians $12:4^{xxvi}$), and to what Daniel was told after his vision (Daniel $12:4^{xxvii}$). I have wondered if perhaps it was something that critics could twist to attack the faith, but which strong believers could receive. Since it is another 7, it may be something like the seven seals, trumpets, and bowls.

⁵ And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven ⁶ and swore 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, that there would be *no more delay*, Revelation 10:5,6 Then the angel swore by the eternal God, the Creator of all that is, that the delay was over. Some translate it as "time will be no more". The Greek express no more delay as "time no longer will be", as it is translated in the KJV. Eternity will be timeless, but ESV captures the sense of the phrase. It is similar to Hebrews 10:37. ³⁷ *For*, "*Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay;* The martyrs asked, "How long O Lord?" The answer here is that God's patience with the wicked is over. The gospel has gone into all the world, and it is time for God's judgments (Matthew 24:14^{xxviii}).

The language of "swearing by Him who lives forever" comes from Deuteronomy 32:40^{xxix} where God swears *as* the One who lives forever that He will judge His enemies. It is used by an angel in Daniel 12:7^{xxx} to announce the consummation of the age. Both apply to what is about to unfold. At the angel's announcement the seventh trumpet would sound, and the mystery of God would be fulfilled. He said that mystery was already announced to God's servants, the prophets. The Creator is about to bring this age to its conclusion.

The added description of God as creator of heaven, earth, and sea and all that is in them points to the sovereignty of God over all He has made. Part of man's rebellion is seeing the wonder of creation with all its complexity and insisting it is all an accident. If you were inspired to paint a masterpiece and people who did not like you insisted it came about by spilled paint, think of how they must despise you to insist on such ridiculousness. Man thinks he can keep denying that there is a day of judgment coming and that all things will just continue on (2 Peter 3:4^{xxxi}). These verses are declaring that there will be a point in time when there is no more delay (Habakkuk 2:3^{xxxii}).

⁷ but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets. Revelation 10:7 Though there are a number of mysteries mentioned in Scripture, I believe this is referring to what Paul declared in Ephesians 1:9,10.⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. The seventh trumpet will bring about all things being united in Christ. Rebellion will be put down. The curse will be lifted. Everyone will either be in Christ and become like Him (1 John 3:2^{xxxiii}), or will be in the place of eternal justice. Everyone must choose. And that is why this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come Matthew 24:14. From the promises of a new covenant declared by Jeremiah and Ezekiel to the many predictions of the Messiah and the salvation He would bring to the world declared by Isaiah and the Psalms (9:1-6; 52:13-53:12; Psalm 9:17^{xxxiv}) and the prophecies in the New Testament, the mystery has been announced to His servants the prophets. When that seventh trumpet sounds, things will wrap up very quickly. We will see the glorious conclusion of God's perfect will.

The mystery may include how this comes about. In Daniel 12:7, a parallel passage to this one, we read, ⁷ And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be

finished. Daniel asked what it meant, but the angel told him to seal up the book until the end comes. The angel added, ¹¹ And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. ¹² Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days. Daniel 12:11,12 Daniel 9:27^{xxxv} tells us that the antichrist makes a covenant for one week. That must be the 70th week which I understand to be the last seven years. In the middle of that week, he breaks the covenant causing sacrifices and offerings to cease and sets up his image that is abomination that makes desolate. This corresponds to the times, time, and half a time or three and a half years or 1260 days, which may be the last half of the final seven years. The power of the holy people comes to an end. I do not have any idea what the extra days are about.

The power of the holy people comes to an end. Only those who are in Christ are holy. Our power in this world comes to an end when we are eliminated by the Antichrist. Then there are three and half years remaining after which, as Daniel 9:27b declares, *the decreed end will be poured out on the desolator.* Revelation 13 will tell us about the Antichrist's war on the saints, God's holy people. Just as Jesus' death won the greatest victory for the souls of mankind, so the martyrdom of the saints seems to initiate the wrath of God that ends this world's evil systems.

⁸ Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." ⁹ So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to me, "Take and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." ¹⁰ And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. It was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. Revelation 10:8-10 The voice from heaven then told John to take the little scroll from the sea and land is mentioned, emphasizing God's sovereignty over His creation. The angel let John know the little scroll would taste like honey but turn bitter in his stomach.

This is very similar to what Ezekiel experienced (compare Ezekiel 2:8-3:4). In fact, the book of Ezekiel parallels Revelation in many ways. A hand presents a scroll to the prophet (Ezekiel 2:9^{xxxvi}). It has writing on the front and back (Ezekiel 2:10^{xxxvii}; Revelation 5:1^{xxxviii}). He is told to eat it. The prophet takes the scroll and eats it (Ezekiel 3:1^{xxxix}). It was sweet as honey (Ezekiel 3:3^{xl}). The scroll was a prophecy to be delivered to the people (Ezekiel 3:4^{xli}). The rest of the book of Ezekiel and Revelation first address God's judgments (Ezekiel 4-32) and the final portion the coming salvation (Ezekiel 33-48) This is not to say that John is copying Ezekiel for John hears the voice from heaven and literally sees these things. Rather, this is to confirm that John is delivering a prophetic revelation as an apostle of Jesus. The major difference between the two is that Ezekiel's message was specifically for Israel while John is proclaiming the end of the entire world as we know it.

The scroll has the words John must prophesy. God's Word is always sweet to the believer. If it is not sweet to you, ask the Holy Spirit to help you receive what you are reading. Ask Him for a hunger for His Word. That is a prayer God longs for us to ask. We should be reading the Word as a love letter to us personally. It should be the highlight of our day and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105^{xlii}). It is our spiritual food to be savored.

But when we know we must share it with the unbeliever who will reject it, it is bitter in our inner being. The gospel is sweet to the believer, but eternal judgment to those who reject it (2 Corinthians $2:15,16^{xliii}$). The preacher finds it sweet as he studies and meditates on it, but he knows there will be those who are upset with him when he delivers it, for there will always be those who hold to what they want to believe despite what the Word of God declares. In much of the world, proclaiming the gospel can result in persecution if not death.

¹¹ And I was told, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings." Revelation 10:11 And we too must speak forth God's Word to our world of lost souls. This was late in John's life. I do not know of any account of him leaving Ephesus once he returned from exile. But he was faithful to write it down and be sure others had access to it so they could fulfill the commission. That includes us. We can go where God sends us, like Seth to Thailand, Cathy to Uganda, Michael to Kenya, or Shari to her Chocolate shop of evangelism. And we support those who print Bibles and distribute them like Spirit of Martyrdom and Wycliff translators. We can pray for nations and people groups that have yet to hear.

This book began with an introduction to the glorified Christ and His messages to the churches of blessing and warning. It continued with the vision of the throne room of heaven and the dilemma of who could open the scroll. Jesus came forth as a lamb that had been slain and was deemed worthy. He opened seal after seal that brought disasters upon the earth. We read of the souls under the altar that asked how long until their deaths were avenged. Jesus told them to wait a little longer. The trumpets began to bring judgment upon the earth. We are now at the seventh trumpet. Jesus or one representing Him has given the little scroll to John for him to eat and then to proclaim to the world the end that is coming, which includes both judgment upon the faithless and heavenly glory for the faithful.

What should we take away from this? The end is certain, and no matter how chaotic and sad the future appears, there is a glorious end. There will be an end to evil. Justice will be served. And until that day comes, let us take in the Word of God as our daily manna (Matthew $4:4^{xliv}$; John $6:35^{xlv},48^{xlvi}$). Let us allow God to lead us into ways that we might advance His kingdom by spreading His Word. Never forget, the Lord's feet are on the land and the sea. He alone is Creator of the heavens and all that is in them, the seas and all that is in them, the land and all that is in it. He is sovereign, and He is good! No matter what is happening around you, you can trust Him!

Questions:

- 1 What are the reasons some believe the mighty angel is Jesus?
- 2 What do all these descriptions of the angel say to us?
- 3 What does having his foot on the land and sea imply?
- 4 Who does the angel swear by and the meaning of that description?
- 5 What does Creator of heavens, land, and sea and all that is in them convey?
- 6 How does the antichrist break the covenant?
- 7 What happens at that time?
- 8 How much time is left? 9 What is the parallel passage to verses 8-11?
- 10 What is your takeaway that helps you walk in the Spirit?

ⁱ Revelation 1:3 (ESV)

³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

"Revelation 8:1 (ESV)

¹ When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

^{....} Luke 21:27 (ESV)

²⁷ And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

[™] Daniel 7:13 (ESV)

¹³ "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.

^v Exodus 19:9 (ESV)

⁹ And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever." When Moses told the words of the people to the LORD,

^{vi} Exodus 13:20-22 (ESV)

²⁰ And they moved on from Succoth and encamped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. ²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. ²² The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

vii Genesis 9:12-16 (ESV)

¹² And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."

viii Ezekiel 1:26-28 (ESV)

²⁶ And above the expanse over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness with a human appearance. ²⁷ And upward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were gleaming metal, like the appearance of fire enclosed all around. And downward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were gleaming metal, like the appearance of fire enclosed all there was brightness around him. ²⁸ Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness all around. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking.

^{ix} Revelation 4:3 (ESV)

³ And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.

× Revelation 1:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

^{xi} Matthew 17:2 (ESV)

² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.

xii Colossians 1:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

xiii Revelation 5:5 (ESV)

⁵ And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."

xiv John 1:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

^{xv} Revelation 12:7-9 (ESV)

⁷ Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, ⁸ but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great

dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

xiv Beale, The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text, New International Greek Testament
Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 526.
xvii D.A. Carson on Revelation part 14

^{ix} James M. Hamilton Jr., *Preaching the Word: Revelation—The Spirit Speaks to the Churches*, ed. R. Kent Hughes (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 223–224.

xix Romans 12:1 (ESV)

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

^{xx} Joshua 10:24-26 (ESV)

²⁴ And when they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, "Come near; put your feet on the necks of these kings." Then they came near and put their feet on their necks. ²⁵ And Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous. For thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight." ²⁶ And afterward Joshua struck them and put them to death, and he hanged them on five trees. And they hung on the trees until evening.

^{xxi} Amos 1:2 (ESV)

² And he said: "The LORD roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds mourn, and the top of Carmel withers."

^{xxii} Amos 3:8 (ESV)

⁸ The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?"

xxiii Revelation 6:1 (ESV)

¹ Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!"

xxiv Revelation 19:6 (ESV)

⁶ Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder,

^{XXV} Psalm 29:3 (ESV)

³ The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over many waters.

xxvi 2 Corinthians 12:4 (ESV)

⁴ and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.

xxviii Daniel 12:4 (ESV)

⁴ But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."

xxviii Matthew 24:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

^{xxix} Deuteronomy 32:40 (ESV)

⁴⁰ For I lift up my hand to heaven and swear, As I live forever,

xxx Daniel 12:7 (ESV)

⁷ And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be finished.

^{xxxi} 2 Peter 3:4 (ESV)

⁴ They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."

xxxii Habakkuk 2:3 (ESV)

³ For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.

xxxiii 1 John 3:2 (ESV)

² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

xxxiv Psalm 9:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ The wicked shall return to Sheol, all the nations that forget God.

xxxv Daniel 9:27 (ESV)

²⁷ And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

xxxvi Ezekiel 2:9 (ESV)

⁹ And when I looked, behold, a hand was stretched out to me, and behold, a scroll of a book was in it.

xxxviii Ezekiel 2:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ And he spread it before me. And it had writing on the front and on the back, and there were written on it words of lamentation and mourning and woe.

xxxviii Revelation 5:1 (ESV)

¹ Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals.

xxxix Ezekiel 3:1 (ESV)

¹ And he said to me, "Son of man, eat whatever you find here. Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel."

^{xl} Ezekiel 3:3 (ESV)

³ And he said to me, "Son of man, feed your belly with this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it." Then I ate it, and it was in my mouth as sweet as honey.

^{xli} Ezekiel 3:4 (ESV)

⁴ And he said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with my words to them.

^{xtii} Psalm 119:105 (ESV)

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

xliii 2 Corinthians 2:15-16 (ESV)

¹⁵ For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

xliv Matthew 4:4 (ESV)

⁴ But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

^{xlv} John 6:35 (ESV)

³⁵ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

^{xtvi} John 6:35 (ESV)

³⁵ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.