

# REVELATION 10 & GOD'S WORD

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Revelation chapter 10 teaches several important lessons about the authority of God's word, its inspiration, its completeness, and the importance of preaching it. In verses 1-2, the Apostle John "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 open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth." The description of this angel most definitely demonstrates the awesome power of God. This mighty angel came with the authority of God. In the angel's hand was a little book which was open. This was not a sealed book. Whatever was written in it could be read and understood. This becomes even more clear when John is told to eat the book and go and preach it to everyone.

## **All scripture is inspired of God**

In Revelation 10:3, the angel "cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices." John understood the words of the seven thunders. Verse four 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.*" John was forbidden from writing down what he heard the seven thunders say, and it is pointless to speculate about it. But Revelation 10:4 is an excellent commentary on the complete, word-by-word inspiration of the book of Revelation. John wrote down exactly what he heard and was told to write and only that. And he wrote it word-for-word. John did not use his own words, nor did he decide what would be in the book. Every word is from God. As we read in Revelation 1:1-3, John "bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw." Truly, "all scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim 3:16).

## **The completion of God's word**

In Revelation 10:5-6, the angel "lifted up his hand to heaven" and swore by God (who is described as eternal and the Creator of all things) "that there should be time no longer." He was not announcing that there would not be time any more for *anything*. Rather, the angel was declaring that it was time for God's *mystery*, His revelation to man, to be completed. He said that "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 has declared to his servants the prophets" (Rev 10:7). Up until this time, God had been declaring His mystery to the prophets, but the time for that would soon be over. Remember, the book

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of Revelation is the last book of the Bible, and then there would be nothing else added to it (Rev 22:18-19). At that time, "all truth" would be completely revealed (John 16:13), and God would no longer directly inspire men to speak His word. This passage strongly refutes the false doctrine that says man continues to receive revelation from God today. God's revelation to man, "the mystery of God" that He "declared to his servants the prophets" indeed was "finished" with the book of Revelation.

## **The preaching of God's word**

The means by which man now hears the word of God is revealed in Revelation 10:8-11, and it is by *preaching*. In verse eight, John heard a voice from heaven tell him, "Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which stands upon the sea and upon the earth." In verse nine, John "went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey." John did as the angel said, and "took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up" which was sweet as honey in his mouth but made his belly bitter (Rev 10:10). The "little book" was the word of God in John's mouth as he went forth to prophesy, and likely refers specifically to the book of Revelation, or possibly this particular part of it ("little book" would not appear to apply to the entire Bible as a whole). God's word is sweet to the taste of any faithful servant of God (Psa 19:7-11; 119:103; Prov 24:13-14). Ezekiel ate his book which was sweet in his mouth (Ezek 3:1-4). Jeremiah said, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart" (Jer 15:16). But God's word also declares severe judgments against wickedness, and leads to persecution and tribulation for those preaching it (Matt 13:21; Mark 4:17; John 7:7; Rev 6:9). We will experience sweetness and bitterness, but we must endure. In spite of the bitterness, the angel told John, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Rev 10:11). God's word is for everyone. We must not grow weary in well doing (Gal 6:9; 2 Thes 3:13), and never be ashamed of God and His word (Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Rom 1:16; 2 Tim 1:8; 1 Pet 4:16). We must continue to follow God's word and teach it to others (Mark 16:15; 1 Cor 15:58; 2 Tim 1:13; 1 Pet 3:15). That is what John did (recall that John was a prisoner on Patmos "for the word of God" while receiving this revelation, Rev 1:9). In fact, Revelation 10 teaches us a very encouraging lesson. Even during great persecution, the word of God will continue to spread and will prevail over every hindrance.