

1. **Introduction:** A reminder: The seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments primarily target the unredeemed (those without the seal of God). The 21 (3 sevens) judgments represent God's righteous wrath against sin and serve as final calls to repentance.

- The punitive aspects of the judgments are all aimed at the wicked, but many of the specific judgments affect the entire global ecosystem through actions like destruction of the sea, rivers, plant life, and the atmosphere. Such things impact not only humans but all living creatures.
- At this point, the sixth trumpet judgment is over. There is an interlude before the seventh angel sounds his trumpet. The interlude begins with a new vision. John is pictured as being on earth after his vision-visit to the heavenly throne room. A mighty angel "wrapped in a cloud" comes to him.

2. **Revelation 10:1-4:** *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."*

- Being wrapped in a cloud signals that the angel is sent by God to carry out judgment. The rainbow over his head is a symbol of God's covenant.
- The angel is of cosmic size, a description suggesting symbolic rather than literal measurement.
- Putting a foot on something means having absolute and ultimate authority over whatever is under it.
- The cosmic dimensions of the angel with His right foot on the sea and left foot on the land signifies God's absolute sovereignty, dominion, and ownership over the entire earth, both inhabited land and chaotic waters. No part of creation is beyond His sovereign dominion.
- In Scripture, the sea frequently represents chaotic nations while the land represents stability. The angel asserts authority over both – chaos and stability.
- The angel gave a shout like the roar of a lion, and then the voices of the seven thunders spoke. The seven thunders are thunder-like voices communicating a message. The Greek word translated "thunder" means "to roar." Thunder is often a mark of judgment in Scripture as in 1 Samuel 2:10, 2 Samuel 22:14, and in Revelation (8:5, 11:19, 16:18).
- The seven thunders and the 7 seals and 7 trumpets each contain judgment messages. Obviously, the thunders spoke intelligible words that John understood and wanted to write down, but as John was about to write, a voice from heaven told him to "*seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down.*"

- Why is John commanded to not write down what he heard? (1.) Perhaps it is a reminder that some future things are not for us to know. We are to live in dependence on God, using the resources He supplies including information about the future. Information He withholds is withheld for our good.
- (2.) It's also possible this is something like 2 Corinthians 12:4. There Paul describes his translation into the third heaven where *“he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.”* Some things are so extraordinary, overwhelming, or glorious, we cannot understand, at least for now.
- Revelation is a book of “unveiling.” The words of the seven thunders are the only words in Revelation that are sealed. We aren't told why they are sealed, but they are sealed for God's good reasons.

3. **Deuteronomy 29:29:** *The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever.*

4. **The Mystery of God's Purpose Fulfilled:** The gigantic angel with one foot on the sea and the other on the land says, *“there would be no more delay.”* In the days of the seventh trumpet the mystery of God would be fulfilled. The mighty angel's sovereignty over both sea and land demonstrates that *God is also ultimately in control over Satan and all his activities.*

5. **The Angel's Oath:** The angel's oath (10:5-7) reveals that when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, God's plan—previously hidden (but mentioned by prophets)—will be finalized with no further delay.

6. **Revelation 10:5-7:** *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, 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.*

- The angel's oath mentions all three spheres - heaven, earth, and sea encompassing all that God has created. There is no place where God's sovereignty doesn't apply, no place His word doesn't apply.
- The "mystery of God" to be revealed seems to refer to the completion of God's redemptive work, the establishment of His kingdom, and the final judgment, signaling the end of the current age.
- Beale notes that God has set a predetermined time in the future for the consummation of His purposes and there will be no delay in terminating history when the time for consummation arrives.

7. **God's Purpose and Intent:** We know that (1.) from the beginning, God has purposed to have for Himself a “holy people” who can live in His presence forever. (2.) When Adam and Eve sinned; evil permeated the whole of earth and at least a portion of heaven. (3.) God intends to eliminate evil from “all creation (earth and heaven and ?).”

- My understanding is that God’s purposes and intentions associated with ending evil and bringing all the redeemed to live in God’s presence will be successfully completed when Jesus comes again.
- Our mixed age of evil and good will end. The new age of restoration to the “as originally created” condition will begin. There will be a new earth and new heavens. People will be separated into two groups, (1.) the believing people of God who will live in His presence in the new city of God, and (2.) those who owe allegiance to someone or something other than the God of Abraham.
- Believers’ hope and joy is knowing God has sworn He will judge wickedness, that believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit and safe “in Christ,” and that they will be “with” God in the consummation.
- Believers’ confidence is grounded in knowing God will win. He has sworn to judge wickedness and provide a place where believers will eternally dwell with Him. No terrorist attack, no nuclear assault, no corruption in government, no sex scandal, no military power or economic collapse can stand in the way of God’s word being fulfilled.

8. **Eat the Scroll and Prophecy Again:** In Revelation 1:10 and 4:1-2, John was instructed to prophesy. Now in 10:8-10, he is recommissioned for further prophesy.

9. **Revelation 10:8-11:** *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.¹¹ And I was told, “You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings.*

- The instructions given to John by the angel are patterned after Ezekiel’s experience of being commanded to eat a scroll (Ezekiel 2-3). Eating the scroll symbolizes the spiritual “assimilation” of its message and the prophet’s personal identification with and submission to its truth.

10. **Jeremiah 15:16:** *Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart.*

- It is important to recognize that God gives to John both authority and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to enable “prophesy” about the future. God is sovereign over all the affairs of men, angels, and demons.
- God knows future events and communicates appropriate future things to John by revelation. John then communicates those things to us through prophecy providing comfort and assurance to believers that God controls present and future. We can rest comfortably knowing He is in charge.
- Our Lord Jesus, by his omnipotent power and infinite wisdom easily upholds all things in their place and guides this rebellious world to its proper consummation. At that time, He

will be glorified and honored as Lord over all! That is what Revelation 10 is all about. The risen Christ wins! He reigns!

11. **The Church between the First and Second Comings of Christ:** What are the prospects for the church between now and the second coming of Christ? What should believers expect in terms of their relationship to the broader culture and the world of unbelievers as a whole? What should believers be doing in that interval? In other words, **what should the church expect and what should we do?**

- Revelation 11 is pertinent to both questions. As far as I can tell, chapter 11 is subject to an abundance of interpretive mysteries and disagreements, perhaps more than any other chapter in Revelation.
- Chapter 11 uses highly figurative, graphic language to describe what the church can expect and what the church should be doing until Jesus comes again. There are strange images of a temple, two unnamed witnesses, and odd references to 42 months, fire and blood, a sadistic beast, death and resurrection, and the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom.
- We could easily spend a lot of time examining the details of this chapter and debating the various schemes and attempts that have been made to make sense of it. Rather than do that, I plan to simply present one view that seems reasonable to me and spend little (but some) time on alternative views.
- The church can expect persecution and severe opposition but as it maintains its prophetic witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ it will be protected and preserved.

12. **Next:** Begin with 11:1-3.