

A Large Saviour & A Little Scroll

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[0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, this evening, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, Revelation chapter 10, Revelation chapter 10, we're going to look at the whole chapter, but if we just read again at verse 8, Revelation chapter 10 and verse 8, where John writes, 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. 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. 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. And so on.

I don't know about you, but one of the things that really annoys me about watching TV is all the adverts. Because you can be watching an interesting TV programme, whatever it may be, wildlife or history, or even getting into a great film, and then all of a sudden it's interrupted with this interlude of all these annoying, really annoying adverts. And most of the time the adverts, as you've seen of late, they're all about gambling.

And you know, in many ways, that's what we have here in Revelation chapter 10. Revelation, this revelation that we're looking at of the seven angels and the seven trumpets, they're interrupted by an interlude. You could say it's an advert. But this interlude, it's not an annoying advert that you would often find on the TV. This interlude that we see in Revelation chapter 10, it's a portrait and it's a picture of a large saviour and a little scroll.

A large saviour and a little scroll. And that's what we see here in Revelation chapter 10. This interlude, it's a portrait and a picture of a large saviour and a little scroll.

So first of all, we're looking this evening at a large saviour. That's the first half of chapter 10. A large saviour. But we're told there in verse 1, Now, as we know, the book of Revelation, it's one long revelation. It's this apocalypsis, an apocalypse.

[3 : 0 5] It's a revelation from Jesus Christ, about Jesus Christ, and it's for us. It's for the church of Jesus Christ. And as we said before, in this revelation, the Lord here, he's lifting the lid. He's pulling back the curtain.

He's removing the veil in order to reveal to us Jesus. He's revealing Jesus Christ as the risen, ruling and reigning king who is going to return. And Jesus, as we've gone through this revelation, he has been gradually and also gloriously been revealed to us. And in this last section that we've been looking at, with seven angels and seven trumpets, these seven angels and seven trumpets, they have revealed the warning of God's divine and definitive judgment. As we saw the first four angels of the apocalypse, they were grouped together. That was in an earlier chapter, chapter 8.

They were grouped together. And we saw there that they presented a scene of terror. Then there was the fifth angel, as we went into chapter 9. And the fifth angel of the apocalypse, when his trumpet blew, he announced the first woe. And the first woe you'll see there at the beginning of chapter 9, it reveals Satan, who was the fallen star of the bottomless pit. He's described as Abaddon or Apollyon, the destroyer of Christians. And then the next trumpet to sound by the sixth angel of the apocalypse, he announces the second woe. And we started looking at that last Wednesday evening. Because when the sixth angel sounds his trumpet, we saw there, just halfway through chapter 9, we saw there that it began with the souls and the supplications of the suffering saints. They were rising there from the golden altar to request that these four angels or these four demons be released from Babylon, the dwelling place for demons. And as we saw last week, the reason they were to be released was because they had been prepared for the destruction and devastation of war. And ultimately, in connection with Matthew 25, ultimately to take unrepentant sinners to hell.

But as we mentioned last week, this section about the second woe, it begins there from chapter 9 and verse 13. So it's a much longer section than any other section. Begins there in chapter 9, verse 13, goes all the way through chapter 10 and also to chapter 11 and verse 14, where it says there, chapter 11, verse 14, the second woe has passed. Behold, the third woe is soon to come.

But what we see with chapter 10 is that chapter 10 forms this important interlude in this section about the second woe. So you almost have part one of the second woe in verse 13 of chapter 9 down to the end and then part 2 in chapter 11. And so chapter 10, it forms this important interlude in this section about the second woe. And it's an important interlude because, I don't know about you as I go through the book of Revelation, but I have found not only this section about the second woe, but this whole section about the seven angels and the seven trumpets, I found it quite heavy.

[6 : 37] Especially the last passage we looked at last Wednesday evening. It's quite heavy, quite harrowing. Because in this section we've been, as a whole, we've seen God's divine and definite judgment.

We've seen all these angels of the apocalypse revealing scenes of terror. And we've seen Satan from the bottomless pit. We've seen Abaddon and Napoleon. We've seen the solemnity of war. And it's all quite heavy. It's all quite harrowing. Which is why you could say that chapter 10 provides a good rest, an important interlude. Not of this annoying advert that you would find on the telly. But it's a beautiful picture and portrait of a large saviour and a little scroll. That's what we're given here in chapter 10. A large saviour and a little scroll.

Now, when we talk about an important interlude, this isn't the first important interlude that we found in the book of Revelation. Because if you go back to chapter 7, chapter 7 verses 1 to 8, they were an important interlude in the book of Revelation. Chapter 7, that important interlude there in verses 1 to 8 of chapter 7, that was given between the sixth and the seventh seal being opened.

And as we saw in chapter 7 verses 1 to 8, the church is sealed with the seal of the living God. So there's an encouragement. In the midst of all the devastation and the heaviness and the harrowing pictures that are revealed, there's this encouragement to the church.

[8 : 12] And now here we have the second interlude, chapter 10. And it comes between the sixth and the seventh angel of the apocalypse blowing their trumpet. And it gives to us this picture, this portrait of a large saviour. That's the first thing we see here, a large saviour. And I want us to see that he's a large saviour because John says there, he says, 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, his legs like pillars of fire. 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, and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring.

When he called out, the seven thunders sounded. Now I want to say from the outset, different commentators have their different opinions, as they always do.

But I want to say from the outset that I believe that the mighty angel in this important interlude is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. As I said before, this is what the whole revelation is about. It's about revealing Jesus as the risen, ruling, and reigning king who's going to return. But there are a number of reasons why I believe that this mighty angel is Jesus Christ.

[9 : 35] First of all, Jesus is revealed in the Old Testament, as you know, as the angel of the Lord. You could say that he's a pre-incarnate Christ, the angel of the Lord, or he's described elsewhere as the angel of the covenant.

And as you know, the word angel means messenger. And also, even in the previous interlude, chapter 7, we saw and said there that Jesus, he's the angel ascending from the rising of the sun with the seal of the living God.

And then in chapter 8, when the seventh seal upon the sovereign scroll was finally opened, and there was this silence in heaven for half an hour, we're told that there was an angel there. Verse 3 of chapter 8.

Another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer. And that angel with the golden censer who mixed and mingled the prayers of the saints with his intercessory incense so that they would rise before God as a sweet-smelling saviour.

We said that that angel there was Jesus, our angel, our messenger, our great high priest. Because that's what he does. He mixes and mingles our prayers and presents them before the throne of grace.

[10:48] Now, some may question, well, I'm a little, how can all these angels, how can they all be Jesus? How can Jesus be all of these angels in all these different chapters? But what we have to remember is that this is an interlude.

This is an advert. This is an interruption from the main revelation. And again, none of it is literal. It's all images. It's all illustrations.

It's all pictures. It's all pointers. It's all symbolism. And it's all showing us the saviour. It's all revealing to us Jesus Christ as the risen, ruling and reigning king who's going to return.

And that's what we see in this important interlude. We see this saviour. We see the symbolism of a large saviour. More than that, we know that it's Jesus Christ because we're told there in chapter 10, we're told, first of all, that he came down from heaven, which is what Jesus did at the incarnation. He came down from heaven to earth. And the fact that he's wrapped in a cloud, that's the next thing we're told, it shows us that he was the beloved son of God the Father because it was from the cloud that God the Father declared, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.

[12:08] We're also told there's a rainbow over his head, which is what John saw in the big revelation, the big storyline that's going on. He saw the lamb in the midst of the throne of heaven and a rainbow over his head.

He also has a face that shone like the sun, which is like the Mount of Transfiguration. He had feet like pillars of fire, emphasizing his holiness and his purity. And so even in these statements that are made there, you can see that they all point to the fact that this mighty angel in this important interlude is Jesus Christ, the risen ruling and reigning king, who's going to return.

We'll come back to the little scroll in his hand in a moment. But what we're told that this saviour, we're told that this saviour was a large saviour for a particular reason.

And he's described as a large saviour because we're told there in verse 2, the end of verse 2, he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land.

It's a large saviour. So he's able to have, he's able to have his right foot on the sea and at the same time, he's able to have his left foot on the land.

[13:22] He's a large saviour. The image is of a giant. He's a giant saviour. He's an all-powerful saviour.

And you know what, I love what's being highlighted there because we're being shown that Jesus Christ, he is Lord over all the earth, both land and sea.

It's a picture and portrait of what Jesus said to his disciples after the resurrection. You remember towards the end of Matthew's gospel, just after Jesus had been raised and he meets the disciples, and what does he say to the disciples as he gives them the great commission to go out into all the world?

First thing he says to them is, you can go out into all the world. Why? Because all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

And you know, what we have here is a picture and portrait of how through the death and resurrection of Jesus, Jesus, he has all authority in heaven and on earth, but more than that, he is the one who has come to redeem, restore, and renew us as fallen sinners, but also to redeem, restore, and renew the fallen creation, land and sea.

[14:42] And that's what Paul reminds us, is it not? Paul reminds us in Romans 8 that even though the creation is groaning, it has this longing, a longing to be redeemed and restored and renewed, to be a new heavens and a new earth.

And so this picture and portrait of how Jesus through his death and resurrection has claimed the kingdoms of this world for himself. He has all authority in heaven and on earth.

He has claimed the kingdoms of this world for himself, both land and sea. And you know, it's interesting to think that Jesus has claimed the kingdoms of this world for himself, because do you remember when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by the devil?

Satan came to Jesus and he offered Jesus many things, but one of the things he offered Jesus was all the kingdoms of this world, which might seem quite strange to us that Satan would come to Jesus, the one who has all authority in heaven and on earth, and offer to Jesus all the kingdoms of this world.

But Satan, as you know, he's the god of this age. He's the prince of the power of the air. He's the ruler of this world. And Satan took Jesus, we're told in Matthew's gospel, and I think in Luke's gospel, he's taken to a high mountain to show him all the kingdoms of this world and their glory.

[16:13] And Satan says to Jesus, you have come to restore the kingdoms of this world to your God and Father. I can give it to you.

I can give all of it to you, says Satan, if you will just bow down and worship me. And you know, we have to wonder why. Why was this even a temptation for Jesus?

Why was that statement from Satan, why was that offer from Satan even a temptation for Jesus? Well, you have to think, well, what was the alternative?

What was the other option? The other option, the one option was bow down to Satan, you'll get all the kingdoms of this world. The other option, was the only way to restore and redeem and renew the kingdoms of this world, was through the cross of Calvary.

And that's what Satan was offering him, offering him a way out of the cross of Calvary. And so when John sees a large saviour with his foot, his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, he knows who this Jesus is.

[17:26] He knows that Jesus Christ is Lord. And he's Lord over all. He is Lord who has all authority in heaven and on earth. And he's the Lord who, through his death and his resurrection, he has begun that great work of redeeming, restoring, and renewing this whole creation, the kingdoms of this world.

They are all his through his death and resurrection. And yet what's remarkable is that this important interlude in chapter 10, it's actually preparing us for what's going to happen in chapter 11.

Because when the seventh trumpet is sounded by the seventh angel, we're told at the end of chapter 11 there, in verse 15, we're told that as soon as the seventh trumpet is sounded, there will be loud voices in heaven saying, and what do they say?

The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever. That's there, verse 15 of chapter 11.

The kingdom of this, of the world, has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever. He has all authority in heaven and on earth.

[18:51] He stands over both land and sea. And you know, you read this and you think, well, how does the Bible all fit together? And it's amazing how the Bible does all fit together.

Because when I was considering this passage and seeing Jesus with his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land standing, I couldn't help but think of what Job said.

Do you remember what Job said about Jesus? Job who was way before the time of Revelation. In fact, he was around the time of Abraham. And yet, I couldn't help but thinking of what Job said.

Job, the man whose life was turned upside down in 32 verses. He went through this awful sickness and sorrows in his life. Job was someone who suffered greatly and yet he looked and he longed for the day, this day, when everything would be redeemed and restored and renewed to that new creation.

Do you remember what Job said in Job chapter 19? I know that my Redeemer liveth and at the last he shall stand upon the earth and after my skin has been destroyed yet in my flesh I shall see God.

[20:11] What a great statement for Job to make. I know that my Redeemer liveth and at the last he shall stand. That's what he's doing here in Revelation 10. He's standing upon the earth and after my skin has been thus destroyed, says Job, yet in my flesh, in my flesh he says, even though I've gone into the grave I will be resurrected and in my flesh I shall see God face to face.

And that's what this Redeemer is doing here. He's standing with his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land. He is the Redeemer who lives.

the Redeemer Job longed to see. But then we read that as this large saviour stood on both land and sea with all authority in heaven and on earth we're told there that he called out.

He called out verse 3 with a loud voice. A loud voice we're told like a roaring lion because he's the lion from the tribe of Judah. But when he called out we're told that seven thunders sounded.

And we're familiar with the number seven because seven is the number of perfection and throughout the Revelation we've seen all these seven seven lampstands and seven stars and seven churches and seven spirits and seven torches seven horns seven eyes seven seals seven angels we're seeing that just now seven trumpets and now John sees the seven what he hears the seven thunders of heaven sounding.

[21:45] And you know you can almost imagine John can't you? This apostle who's getting this great revelation that all took place on the Lord's day he's getting this great revelation and as soon as he hears these seven thunders sounding we're told there verse 4 I was about to write.

John immediately he thinks I need to write this down so he starts looking for his pencil. He's been writing everything down he's been writing down what was said to the seven churches he's been writing down what happened when all these seven seals were opened he's been writing down what happened when the seven trumpets and the seven angels are sounding and now as John hears these seven thunders of heaven you can almost imagine the apostle frantically looking for his pencil and a piece of paper thinking I have to write all this down in case I miss something in case something amazing happens and I miss it but then we're told verse four when the seven thunders had sounded I was about to write I had my pencil out says John I was about to put pencil to paper but I heard a voice from heaven saying seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down

John put down your pencil now here's a question for you what did the seven thunders say what did the seven thunders say we don't know what the seven thunders said John knows what they said we don't know what they said because it doesn't tell us what they said John didn't write it down he did as he was told he put down his pencil and that's the point because you know there are things that our large saviour who has all authority in heaven and on earth there are things that he has not revealed to us there are things that he has not revealed to us he has not revealed to us the how of creation in its finer details he has not revealed to us the who of election in the wonder of salvation he has not even revealed to us the why of providence the why of providence especially when it's a painful providence and you know you think well with the sealing up of the seven thunders of heaven we have been reminded there that there are things which

God has not revealed to us but one day he will there are things in our life that have taken place and we might wonder why and we don't know just now but one day we're being told here one day we will and you know that's what's displayed as we keep reading the passage that's what's demonstrated to us there in verse five the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven and swore by him who lives forever and ever who created heaven and what is in it the earth and what is in it the sea and what is in it that there would be no more delay 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 and what we're being told there is that although the seven thunders of heaven are sealed just now they will one day be revealed and they will be revealed by our large saviour who has all authority in heaven and on earth they will be revealed by our large saviour who has all the kingdoms of this world in his hand they are the kingdom of our lord and of his

Christ one day all these things will be revealed and doesn't it remind you of those words those precious words in the divine weaver I'm always reminded of them especially with providence that not till the loom is silent and the shuttle cease to fly shall God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why the dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hand as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he has planned it's his plan and because it's his plan there are things which our large saviour has not revealed to us but what he has revealed what he has revealed to us he has revealed it to us in his little scroll which is what I want us to think about lastly and very very briefly the little scroll so there's the large saviour first half of the chapter and then a little scroll a little scroll he says in verse 8 then the voice that I 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 so I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll and he said to me take it and eat it it will make your stomach bitter but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey 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 you know people who love reading often describe their reading habits by saying that they devour books

[27 : 34] I'm sure you've heard people saying that maybe you say it as a reader that they devour books of course they're using a figure of speech to emphasize and explain just how much they love reading because as you know books are to be enjoyed they're not to be eaten literally that's not what John has been told to do here with this little scroll John was told that the only way to enjoy the scroll was to eat the scroll the only way to enjoy the scroll was to eat the scroll but as we said there are things which our large saviour has not revealed to us but what he has revealed he has revealed it to us in this little scroll and of course the little scroll scroll is the word of God because the little scroll in the hand of the large saviour it wasn't that sovereign scroll which we saw earlier in the revelation the sovereign scroll which had seven seals upon it the sovereign scroll that was in the right hand of the one who was seated upon the throne we saw there that that scroll the sovereign

scroll it had writing on the inside and the outside it revealed and represented all the eternal decrees of God it it presented to us

God's eternal plan for this world his plan of sweet salvation and also bitter judgment the sovereign scroll it contained a complete and comprehensive plan of God's eternal decrees for this world but not everything on that scroll is revealed to us what he has revealed to us is on the little scroll which is the word of God and you know this is nothing new what we're seeing here in Revelation chapter 10 is nothing new because in the Old Testament Deuteronomy chapter 29 verse 29 the Lord told his people he told them that the secret things belong to the Lord our God that's the sovereign scroll but the things that are revealed in the little scroll they belong to us and to our children that we may do all the words of his law the secret things belong to the Lord but these other things the little scroll that's revealed to us and to our children that we may do all the words of this law and that's what this little scroll is about the little scroll has been revealed to us it's been given to us for us and for the next generation our children and this little scroll that we have as you know it's the full and final revelation of Jesus

Christ it contains all the prophecies and all the proclamations and all the promises of our covenant God which are to us and to our children and you know what's really interesting is that the Greek word used here for scroll throughout the chapter or book if you're using the authorised version the Greek word is the word biblion biblion which as you can probably guess is where you get the word bible from and so this is our biblion this is our biblion this is our scroll this is our supreme standard this is our book this is our bible and it's the full and final revelation of Jesus Christ it's the little scroll and it's an infallible scroll it's an inerrant scroll it's an inspired scroll it's God breathed it's spirit filled it is the only rule to direct us on how we may glorify

God and enjoy him forever and you know that's why we have that great reformation principle of sola scriptura scripture alone because scripture the little scroll must be our highest authority because it has been given to us it's our highest authority for faith and life so all we do all our theology all our doctrine all our teaching all our preaching how we worship how we conduct ourselves as the church of Jesus Christ it must all be governed and guided by the little scroll of scripture alone it must all conform to the book this biblion the little scroll what's more and with this we'll conclude the time is gone but you know what's more is that John is told not only to take the scroll but eat it eat the scroll he's to devour the book he's to read it and to digest it when was the last time you were told to do that with your bible read it and digest it because when

John does when he reads and digests the little scroll he's told it'll be sweet as honey in his mouth that's what we're to do too we're to take the bible read it eat it and whether we're reading it personally whether we're reading it as a public gathering this evening whether we're reading it in a bible study group when we eat the scroll when we devour and digest god's word it is as we're told here it will be as sweet as honey to our mouth that's how David described it in psalm 19 that we're singing earlier David described god's word as more precious than gold and sweeter than honey they more than gold he said yea much fine gold to be desired are than honey honey from the comb that droppeth sweeter far and you know in a moment we're going to sing one of my favorite verses from psalm 119 psalm 119 as you know it's the longest psalm in the psalter it's the longest chapter in the bible and it's a chapter all about the importance and the influence of this little scroll in our lives it's all about the importance and the influence of god's word the impact that it's to make on our lives and psalm 119 and verse 103 it's a lovely verse great verse to memorize how sweet unto my taste o lord are all thy words of truth yea i do find them sweeter far than honey to my mouth that's how we should view the bible that's how we should see this little scroll we should see it as honey to our mouth it's sweet to our taste but lastly what makes the sweetness of god's word bitter in our belly because that's what happened to john it was sweet as honey in his mouth but when he had eaten it he says my stomach was made bitter what makes the sweetness of god's word bitter in our belly it's when it's applied in our lives when the word of god is applied in our lives because as you know it's all good and well sitting here this evening being hearers of the word but we need to be doers also that's what the new testament tells us it's great receiving all the information but there needs to be the application in our lives we need to put into practice what we are hearing and the application that's what often makes it bitter it's great to hear it but it's harder to live it and you know it makes god's word becomes bitter to us when we're confronted about our sin god's word becomes bitter to us when we're challenged about our own self righteousness god's word becomes bitter to us when we are called to conform to the scroll and not to self god's word becomes bitter in our belly

when we see that we need to live it out to the glory of god that's what makes it bitter in our belly and [35 : 54] 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 time time time time has gone but what we see in Revelation chapter 10 beautiful chapter great chapter it's not this annoying advert that you'd find on the telly but it's an important interlude in the revelation and it's an important interlude that presents to us a portrait and a picture of a large saviour and a little scroll and God willing as the revelation resumes next week we'll see what happens may the Lord bless these thoughts to us let us pray O Lord our gracious God we give thanks to thee that thou art one who is a large saviour and we bless thee and we praise thee that thou art the one who has all authority in heaven and on earth the one who has put all his enemies under his feet and we bless thee tonight that the sovereign scroll is in his hand and that he is working all things together for good to those who are the called according to his own purpose and

Lord we confess that there are things that we don't know there are things that we don't understand but these secret things we know that they belong to thee and to thee alone help us then to trust thee in the darkness knowing that even the darkness is as light unto thee but Lord help us to use thy word as that lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path that daily it would be sweet to our taste and Lord even as we apply it in our lives although it may be bitter that it might be of benefit to us to build us up in ruling and one day will return help us Lord to keep our eyes firmly upon him knowing Lord that he is he is a wonderful saviour who has done in us and for us exceedingly abundantly above all more than we could ask or even think we remember again tonight those who are mourning we ask that thou would comfort them that they would know the peace of God that passes all understanding and Lord those of thy people who are drawing near to Jordan's river we ask Lord that they would know thy presence that even though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death that they would fear no evil being assured Lord that thy rod and their staff shall surely comfort them Lord do us good and we pray go before us we plead help us to be faithful witnesses for thee and ultimately for the furtherance of thy kingdom for we ask it in Jesus name and for his sake Amen Well we bring our service to our conclusion this evening Psalm 119 at verse 101 Psalm 119 page 408 in the Scottish Psalter Psalm 119 verse 101 my feet from each ill way I stayed that I may keep thy word I from thy judgments have not swerved for thou hast taught me Lord how sweet unto my taste O Lord are all thy words of truth yea I do find them sweeter far than honey to my mouth we're saying on down to verse 106 of Psalm 119 to God's praise God's praise my feet from each in way I spit that I may be thy word I from thy judgments have not swerved for thou thou hast taught me Lord how sweet unto my taste O Lord are all thy words of truth yea I do find them sweeter far than honey to my mouth I through thy precepts of God pure to understanding yet I live for every way thus falls with all my heart to hate thy word is to my feet above and to my path of light [41 : 39] I swore half and I will perform to keep thy judgments wide the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen