

Study 17 The Sanctuary Service Series

The Finishing of the Mystery of God

Summary: The message proclaiming the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary is the message contained in the little book open which the mighty angel of Rev 10 gives to God's end-time people represented by John in vision, to be proclaimed again to languages, peoples, nations and tongues. The cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary results in a people who are totally cleansed from sin and is the finishing of the mystery of God.

The Mighty Angel, His Identity and Mission

1. Who is the Mighty Angel of Rev 10 and why does he come? What is his mission?

- a. No less a personage than Jesus Christ (**7BC 971**);
- b. There are 3 mighty angels in Revelation (**Rev 5:2; Rev 10:1; Rev 18:21**)
- c. The mighty angel of Revelation 10 is the only one whose appearance and position is described in great detail;
- d. The mighty angel of Rev 10 the only one of the three who swears an oath and swears by the titles of God;
- e. Breakdown of Rev 10
 - i. **Rev 10:1-4**---describes the mighty angel, his message and the 7 thunders
 - ii. **Rev 10:5-7**---the oath of the mighty angel which is given in support of the declaration of the finishing of the mystery of God
 - iii. **Rev 10:8-11**---John's visionary experience with the little open book or scroll which is given to him by the angel and which he is told to eat
- f. 7 actions of the mighty angel of Rev 10:
 - i. He comes down from heaven to earth
 - ii. He holds a little open book in his hand
 - iii. He places one foot on land and one foot on sea
 - iv. He calls out in a loud voice that sounds like the roar of lion and which results in 7 thunders
 - v. He raises his hand and swears an oath by the Creator's name to announce that the mystery of God should be finished
 - vi. He gives John the little open book to eat and announces that he must prophesy again;

The Open Book

2. What is the open book in the hand of the mighty angel?

- a. This open book is the same book that was shut up and closed in Daniel 12
 - i. Thematic and textual links between Dan 12 and Rev 10 proves this:

Angel of Dan 12	Mighty Angel of Rev 10
v.6 feet upon waters of river	v.2 Feet on water and land

v.7 holds up hands and swears by heaven	v. 5-7 swears by the name of the Creator
v.7 oath is related to time	v. 5-7 oath is related to time
v. everything will be finished	v. 5-7 mystery of God to be finished

- b. **Dan 12:9, 4**—the book that was in Daniel’s hand was sealed, taken by the angel and delivered to John in Rev 10
- c. **Dan 8:14, 26**—the message in the sealed book is the proclamation of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary at the end of the 2300 prophetic days

Another Thematic Link:

3. How does the description of the mighty angel further corroborate the link between his message and the prophecy of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary in Daniel 8?

- a. The description of this mighty angel
 - i. Wrapped in clouds and with feet like pillars of fire
 - ii. The appearance of the cloud cover and the pillar of fire marked the beginning of the morning and evening in the Israelite camp in the wilderness and therefore marked the time of the offering of the morning and evening sacrifice
 - iii. Dan 8:14 literally says, unto 2330 morning-evenings shall the sanctuary be cleansed

Swearing by an Oath

4. How does the oath of the mighty angel also lend support to the idea that the message of the mighty angel of Rev 10 is linked with the high priestly ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 7:20-21).

The Mystery of God

5. What is the mystery of God? Rom 16:25; Eph 3:3-6; Eph 6:19; Col 1:27

- a. The mystery of God is the gospel of Jesus Christ;
- b. The gospel and the benefits obtained are based on the eternal redemption Jesus accomplished on the cross and His work in the heavenly sanctuary as High Priest to dispense those benefits

6. Why is the gospel called a mystery?

The Lord Jesus is making experiments on human hearts through the exhibition of His mercy and abundant grace. He is effecting transformations so amazing that Satan, with all his triumphant boasting, with all his confederacy of evil united against God and the laws of His government, stands viewing them as a fortress impregnable to his sophistries and delusions. They are to him an incomprehensible mystery. The angels of God, seraphim and cherubim, the powers commissioned to cooperate with human agencies, look on with astonishment and joy, that fallen men, once children of wrath, are through the training of Christ developing characters

after the divine similitude, to be sons and daughters of God, to act an important part in the occupations and pleasures of heaven. **TM 18**

The Finishing of the Mystery of God

7. What is the meaning of the finishing of the mystery of God?

- a. Referring to the finishing of the second phase of Jesus' high priestly ministration in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary to make a final and full atonement for His people
- b. Also referred to as the closing work for the church (**3T 266**)
- c. Results in a people who are cleansed and perfect in character (**Lev 16:30, Dan 9:24, Dan 12:10, Mal 3:1-3, Eph 5:27; Rev 14:5, Rev 19:7-8, Heb 8:10-12**)
 - i. **Dan 9:24**--Finish transgression, make an end of sin bringing in everlasting righteousness
 - ii. **Heb 10:2**---perfecting of the conscience
 - iii. **Mal 3:1-3**—the purification of the sons of Levi
 - iv. **Dan 12:10**—many purified and made white
 - v. **Rev 14:5**—no fault or guile before the throne of God
 - vi. **Rev 19:7-8**—the people of God arrayed in fine linen
 - vii. **Rev 3:18**—Laodicea clothed in white raiment
 - viii. **Eph 5:27**--No spot or wrinkle or any such thing
 - ix. **Heb 8:10-12**—new covenant fulfilled to the fullest

8. Why is the mystery of God to be finished before the 7th trumpet can be sounded?

- a. The 7th trumpet announces the close of human probation
 - i. God directly establishes His rule on earth
 - ii. 7 last plagues poured out
 - iii. The wicked are destroyed at the 2nd coming of Jesus
- b. God needs to demonstrate before the whole universe and to Satan and wicked, that the Law can be kept and obeyed perfectly; otherwise, they continue to have an excuse for sinning and cannot be, in fairness, consigned to the lake of fire.
- c. In the 144,000 perfect saints, God will have the legal right to punish the wicked for their disobedience; this is what brings the great controversy to an end
- d. This is central focus of the message of the mighty angel of Rev 10

The Call to Prophecy Again

9. Who is called in Rev 10 to prophecy again and why?

- a. John represents a people living in the time of the end who will proclaim the message of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary in **Dan 8:14**.
- b. Historically had its beginnings in the Millerite movement of 1844; the proclamation of the message was sweet because it brought revival and reformation to those who accepted it, but it turned bitter when the hopes of the second coming turned to disappointment
- c. Will be more fully fulfilled in the experiences of their spiritual heirs as they come to understand the message better and learn to experience its power in their personal lives

- d. The proclamation of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary is absolutely good news but it will bring derision, mockery and rejection from the hands of those who oppose it. . (Jer 15:16; Ps 19:10; Ps 119:103).

The Timing of the Coming of the Mighty Angel

- a. To understand ore fully why he comes, the timing of his coming needs to be noted
- i. A brief review of the 7 trumpets brings to light the timing of the coming of the mighty angel
1. First trumpet---attack on Rome to by the Visigoths under Alaric (395 AD)
 2. Second trumpet—attack on of Rome by the Vandals under Genseric (468 AD)
 3. Third trumpet---the Huns pillage Rome under Attila
 4. Fourth trumpet---sacking of Rome by the Heruli power under Odoacer in 476 AD ; Rome decapitated with the total loss of political power;
 5. Fifth trumpet—siege of eastern Rome or the Byzantine empire by the Moslem Turks for 150 years (1299 to 1448); apostate Christianity eclipsed by the rise of Islam
 6. Sixth trumpet---Islam torments the Byzantine empire (eastern Rome) for 391 years, from 1453 to 1844

Traditional understanding of the time of the end of the 6th trumpet based on GC 334-335:

In the year 1840, another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the Second Advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire, and specifying not only the year but the very day on which this would take place. According to this exposition, which was purely a matter of calculation on the prophetic periods of Scripture, the Turkish government would surrender its independence on the eleventh day of August, 1840. The prediction was widely published, and thousands watched the course of events with eager interest. At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction. When it became known, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates, and a wonderful impetus was given to the Advent movement. Men of learning and position united with Miller, both in preaching and publishing his views, and from 1840 to 1844 the work rapidly extended. **GC 334-335.**

Alternative understanding of the time of the ending of 6th trumpet

- ii. the starting point of the 391 years in 1453 (the fall of Constantinople) to the proclamation of the Edict of Toleration by the Sublime Porte of the Ottoman empire Mar 21 1844, effectively stopping the persecution of Christians in Moslem the states; this interpretation is more in line with the context of Rev 9:15

“ it is the special and constant intention of His Highness the Sultan that his cordial relations with the High Powers can be preserved, and that a perfect reciprocal friendship be maintained and increased. The Sublime Porte engages to take effectual

measures to prevent henceforward the execution and putting to death of the Christian who is an apostate--- **March 21st, 1844**”

“Declaration of His Highness the Sultan to Sir Stratford Canning at his audience on the **23rd of March 1844**: Henceforward neither shall Christianity be insulted in my dominions, nor shall Christians be in any way persecuted for their religion.”

iii. Points to consider:

1. From the time of the Fall of Constantinople (1453) to 1844 is exactly 391 years (“day, month and year” of Rev 9:15); persecutions of Christians by Muslim Turks happened after the fall of Constantinople
 2. The 6th trumpet is not really dealing with the political rise and fall of the Ottoman empire but the period of time dealing with the beginning and ending of the persecution of Christians in eastern Rome;
 3. This view does not consider the prophetic “hour”
 4. The mighty angel of Rev 10 could not have said “there is time no longer” in Aug 11, 1840 since there was 4 years left to the end of the 2300 days prophecy.
- iv. At this time, the mighty angel of Revelation appears at the scene to announce by an oath, the ending of the longest time prophecy, the 2300 days
- v. This prophecy of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary at the end of the 2300 years was sealed back in the time of Daniel, until the time of the end;
- b. In short, the mighty angel’s mission is to announce ending of the 2300 years prophetic period and the commencement of the final work of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary to cleanse it.

The Seventh Trumpet

1. **The blowing of the seventh trumpet**---it is only after the mystery of God is finished that the 7th trumpet begins to sound.
 - a. **NOTE:** The finishing of the mystery of God is what brings about the blowing of the 7th trumpet; in other words, if the mystery of God cannot be finished, the 7th trumpet cannot be blown.
 - b. In other words, God cannot judge the wicked and bring the great controversy to an end until is demonstrated that God’s Law can be kept perfectly; this is why the mystery of God is finished first resulting in a class of believers who keep the Law perfectly (**Rev 14:12**);
 - c. This demonstration leaves the wicked with no more excuse to break the Law of God and are rightfully judged;
 - d. God has to prove that His Law can be kept otherwise, He has no right to end anyone to the lake of fire, including Satan
 - e. REMEMBER: the central issue in the great controversy is: the Law of God cannot be kept;
2. The finishing of the mystery of God does three things:
 - a. Cleanses and restores the sanctuary to its pure and undefiled state
 - b. Restore humanity to the state of sinlessness that Adam had before the fall
 - c. Settles the great controversy

3. **The nature of the 7th trumpet**---final collapse of spiritual Babylon just as the first six trumpets brought about the collapse of medieval Rome (**Rev 11:15-18**)
 - i. The 7th trumpet—depict the finality of human events; begins with the close of probation and the outpouring of the seven last plagues; God intervenes in human affairs and sets His direct rule on earth