

Revelation

Notes #10A

Seal #7 - Trumpet #6: Little Book

Chapter 10

Trumpet

#6
[Part 1]

Description

(1) I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a **cloud**; and the **rainbow** was upon his head, and his face was like the **sun**, and his feet like **pillars of fire**; (2) and he had in his hand **a little book** which was open. (Revelation 10:1-2a NASB)

Symbology

Cloud
Rainbow
Sun
Pillar of Fire
Little Book

Meaning(s)

Witness
Hope and peace
Glory of God; dawn of a new day
Word of God
Bible opened to masses; printed in accessible format

Period

1440-1536 AD

Interpretation

Printing of the Bible, opening it to the masses

On May 29, 1453, Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, fell to the Turks, bringing an end to the long history of the Roman Empire. Along with this event, there were two other events occurring in Europe that would set the stage for the opening of the little book.

First, as noted under Notes #8C, around 534 AD, the official language of the ERE had changed from Latin to Greek. When Constantinople fell, many migrated to Europe and took with them **Greek manuscripts of scripture**. This opened the door for translating scripture directly from Greek to English and bypassing the old Latin language altogether.

Second, the **printing press** was coming on line in the same time period. The Chinese are generally given credit for printing on paper in the 8th century, and then inventing movable type printing around 1041 AD. However, the concept did not take hold until **Johannes Gutenberg** of Mainz, Germany came along and invented the first wooden printing press using metal movable type in 1436. This led to the **Gutenberg Bible** being printed from **1452-1455**; the same time period that Constantinople was being attacked by the Turks. It is reported that, by 1500 AD, there were over 1,000 printing presses in 250 European cities, and over 9 million copies of 30,000 books had been printed. In 1466 AD, William Tyndale translated the New Testament from the Greek to English. He then translated the Old Testament from Hebrew to English and compiled the **Cloverdale Bible** in 1536 AD. For his efforts, the Roman church burned him at the stake on October 6, 1536.

Thus, Greek manuscripts and the printing press set the stage for the opening of the little book, which is the Bible. The course of history began to change at this point; a change the apparent church, which had held the masses under their control and superstition, could not hold back. After all, the angel that held the little open book was a strong angel, meaning there was no stopping what he was bringing to earth. God had spoken and it was to be done.

However, the Roman Catholics were not enamored by the printing press, especially if it were used to challenge or bring into question any of their doctrines. The **Fifth Lateran Council** was held from **1512-1517** and during this time a papal bull was released that **censored the printing of any book that the papacy determined was contrary to church teaching or dogma**. All books had to be submitted to the "vicar" or bishops for approval. Failure to comply led to fines, excommunication, and penalty under the law. See **Notes #10B – Censorship of Printed Books**.

A few points about the symbols: The appearance of the strong angel clearly indicated the nature of the good news that was about to be opened up to the people after a long season of being repressed. The **cloud** signified *the witness of God's word*. The **rainbow** signified the *hope and peace* that God's word brings to people. The **pillar of fire** speaks of the *Word of God*. "**Is not My word like fire?**" declares the Lord (Jeremiah 23:29). Finally, the Bible is described as **little** because, prior to the printing press, it was a **huge book** chained in a church building.

Barton Warren Johnson (1833-1894), perhaps, best sums it up in his *People's New Testament*.

Beginning in the early part of the sixteenth century, within a short time of the date already reached, was a movement which corresponds fully to the symbols. Indeed the REFORMATION might be said to have begun earlier with Wickliffe and Huss, but was fully inaugurated in the sixteenth century.

It was (1) a movement in which **Christ came in spirit**; (2) a movement **full of peace and hope**; (3) a movement to **diffuse light**; (4) a movement for the **whole world**; (5) a movement **due to the influence of the open book**.

The Reformation was the *work of a book*. Whatever the Romish clergy may pretend now, there is no doubt that before the Reformation they had taken the Bible from the people. The whole influence of the Catholic Church was opposed to its circulation, and in many instances persons have been burned for no other crime than having the Bible in their houses. The book was left sealed up in dead languages, and it was impossible for it to be read in the native tongue of any European people. This radiant angel, however, has in his *hand* a book *open*, significant of the fact that God's providence the Reformation should present the New Testament, *open*, to the world.

In light of the above, some believe that the radiant angel was Jesus Himself based on the similarity to His transfiguration on the mountain in the presence of three of His disciples.

And He was **transfigured** before them; and **His face shone like the sun**, and His garments became as white as light. (Matthew 17:2 NASB)

His face shone like the sun just as the strong angel's face was like the sun.

John heard Jesus declare that, in relation to His Church, He had eyes like a flame, and feet like burnished bronze, indicating that He is the **Refiner and Judge of His Church**.

See **Notes #2A – Seven Churches**.

Christ is the **Word of God** and His word is like fire. He is coming back in the same way that He went up over 2,000 years ago, in a cloud (Acts 1:9-11). Finally, He who was sitting on the throne earlier in John's vision was surrounded by a rainbow (Revelation 4:3.)

If the angel was not the Lord Himself, then the strong angel surely represented Jesus in every respect, for the whole of the Reformation was about Him. Opening the little book for the masses meant that Christ was being opened up to them.

Thus, the Reformation was truly a movement in which Christ came *in spirit*.

Trumpet**Description**#6
[Part 2]

(2) He placed his right foot on **the sea** and his left on **the land**; (3) and he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars; and when he had cried out, the **seven peals of thunder** uttered their voices. (4) When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "**Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them.**" (Revelation 10:2b-4 NASB)

Symbology**Meaning(s)**

Sea/Land

Whole world

Thunder

Papal bulls, decrees, anathemas

Period**Interpretation****1483-1588 AD****The Reformation**

With the little book, the Bible, now an open book, a great spiritual earthquake began to shake the Roman church of popes and bishops with their indulgences, purgatory, and superstitions. People were beginning to realize that what they were told by the apparent church and its leaders did not match scripture. A Reformation was on the horizon.

Prior to the 1500's, there were some reformers like Wyclif and Hus who tried to stand against the corruption of the apparent church, but they were soon silenced. However, most people date the **Protestant Reformation** starting on **October 31, 1517**, when **Martin Luther** (1483-1546), an Augustinian monk, became indignant over the condition of the apparent church. So, on this infamous date, Luther nailed **95 theses** to the church door at Wittenberg, Saxony. In turn, **Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther in 1520**. Luther responded by burning the **papal bull**.

Soon England broke from the Roman Catholics and Protestantism began to take root in that country. In **1534**, the English Parliament enacted the **Act of Supremacy**, making the **King of England Protector and only Supreme Head of the Church and the Clergy of England**. This was hardly a Spirit led move. It was secular; nevertheless, it is the date most agree was the start of the **Protestant Reformation in England**.

The angel standing on the sea and land are viewed by others in one of two ways. First, it simply means that the stage was set for the Word of God to go forth unhindered into the whole world. Second, it refers to an event that took place in **July 12, 1588** when the **Spanish Armada** set sail for England to try to force them back under Roman Catholicism. However, the fleet never made it. More than half of the ships were either destroyed by the English or by storms in the North Sea. Thus, the strong angel had put his foot down on the sea, which allowed the little book to remain open and to spread across the seas and lands of the world.

What about the **peals of thunder**? John was told to seal up what he heard, so we are left to conjecture. One suggestion is that John heard the **papal bulls** going forth against the protestors of the Roman church. As such, this signifies that they would be silenced. Their "bulls" might have gone forth as if they had teeth, so to speak, but heaven silenced their effect. Since the number 7 signifies *perfection* or *completion*, the words of the 7 peals sent forth by the Roman church were completed and silenced. Another commentator adds to this thought by seeing the **7 thunders as threats and authoritative fulminations coming from the 7-hills of Rome**. These thunders derived their authority from the 7-hilled city, so that when they went forth they thundered, bringing fear upon the people. They are thunderbolts against the true, liberating gospel. But the good news is that the strong angel sealed them up in the time of the Reformation so that they were of no effect.

Trumpet	Description
#6 [Part 3]	(5) Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven , (6) and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE EARTH AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS IN IT , that there will be delay no longer , (7) but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished , as He preached to His servants the prophets. (Revelation 10:5-7 NASB)
Symbology	Meaning(s)
Right Hand	Divine power
Mystery	Secret
Period	Interpretation
1588 AD	Announcing the 7th Trumpet

John saw the strong angel, who had the little book and was standing on the sea and the land, lifting his right hand toward heaven. This must have been an amazing awesome sight to John.

The *hand* signifies "power," and the *right hand* signifies "eminent" or "divine power." Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19; Acts 2:33). Stephen, being full of the Holy Spirit, saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55). John saw Jesus holding seven stars in His right hand (Revelation 1:16).

In this part of the vision, as John saw the strong angel lifting his right hand toward heaven, he heard the angel declare that there would be delay no longer. How could he do this? He could because He swore by the very Creator of all things. The angel was proclaiming the universal truth first given in the book of beginnings.

This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that **the LORD God made earth and heaven**. (Genesis 2:4 NASB)

Later in John's vision, an angel came into view calling on the earth to worship the Creator.

(6) And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; (7) and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; **worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters**." (Revelation 14:6-7 NASB)

But within the sound of this trumpet, the angel invoked the divine power of God Himself and declared there would be no delay once the 7th angel sounded his trumpet. There would be no more persecutions, sufferings, or martyrdom of His saints.

When this angel sounds, there will be no more mystery; no more silence or interludes from heaven, for **the kingdom of our Lord** will have come. God spoke to us through prophets in parts and in shadows; He revealed Himself in His Son; and soon the world will be introduced to the Son of God, the One who has been behind and in the history of the earth from its very beginning. The Revelation of Jesus Christ will be manifested to the glory of God.

Trumpet**#6**
[Part 4]**Description**

(8) Then the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, "Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land." (9) So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. 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**." (10) I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter. (11) And they said to me, "You must **prophecy again** concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings." (Revelation 10:8-11 NASB)

Symbology

Bitter
Sweet
Many Peoples

Meaning(s)

Persecution for those who taste the sweet Word of God
The Lord and His word
World

Period**1452-1588 AD****Interpretation****Persecution for personally partaking of the Word of God**

John was then commanded to take the little book that was open from the same angel and eat it, meaning partake of the Word of God. This is the fourth time that the book is mentioned, as if to reinforce that fact that henceforth it would never be shut or closed again. It is forever an open book to the people of the world. But let us not forget that Jesus is the **Word of God**. He is the sweetness of God, something David knew while in the midst of trial.

O taste and see that the LORD is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! (Psalm 34:8 NASB)

Ezekiel had a similar experience as John.

(1) Then He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; **eat this scroll**, and go, speak to the house of Israel." (2) So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll. (3) He said to me, "Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you." Then I ate it, and **it was sweet as honey in my mouth**. (4) Then He said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and **speak with My words** to them. (Ezekiel 3:1-4 NASB)

This confirms, without any doubt, that the little book was the Word of God, for it is the only book in the world that records the words of God; and, to all who partake of it, it is as sweet as honey. Although the record does not state that it turned bitter in his stomach, it does confirm that it embittered him. He was told to speak to the rebellious house of Israel (10 tribes), and he "**went embittered in the rage of my spirit, and the hand of the Lord was strong on me**" (Ezekiel 3:14).

However, we are told directly that when the word reached John's stomach it became bitter, and he was told he had more to prophecy. Truly, those who received the sweet word of Christ were persecuted by the Roman church. In this sense, the word became bitter as persecution by the apparent church set in once again in response to the Reformation.

For example, from 1540-1570 AD, Roman Catholic armies butchered about 900,000 **Waldensian Christians** of all ages; from 1550-1560 AD, Roman Catholic troops slaughtered about 250,000 **Dutch Protestants** through torture, hanging, burning, etc.

John was the last of the original apostles, so in a sense, he represented the **apostolic ministry** of the true Church. Also, since John had outlived all the others, we could say that he was a type of the **conquerors** as well.

In a more narrow contextual sense, John represented the **reformers** and their **printing presses** that opened the little book to others. The reformers partook of the Word of God and it was sweet to them, especially in comparison to the rancid word that came forth from the corrupt Roman church. However, as they opened the book to others, the Roman Catholic church persecuted them and tried to stop them.

Like Ezekiel, they too were sent to a rebellious people, only, in this case, it was the Roman Catholics, the apparent church that had banned the reading of the Word of God because they did not want the people to know how corrupt and immoral they truly were. They had substituted their own traditions, superstitions, teachings, and church law for the true Word and Law of God. It was all done for their own benefit (i.e., the institutional hierarchy) and not for the people.

In quoting Isaiah, Jesus put His finger on the problem with the religious leaders in Jerusalem during the 1st century.

(6) And answering, He said to them, Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you, hypocrites; as it has been written: "**This people honors Me with the lips, but their heart is far away from Me;** (7) and in vain they worship Me, **teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**" Isa. 29:13 (8) For forsaking the commandment of God, you hold **the tradition of men:** immersings of utensils and cups, and many other such like things you do. (9) And He said to them, **Well do you to set aside the commandment of God so that you may keep your tradition?** (Mark 7:6-9 LITV)

We need to be clear that the problem was not misinterpretation of scripture; the problem was taking scripture and adding to it, changing it, or twisting it to suit their own selfish desires and agenda. It was tantamount to overruling the Word of God itself.

Jesus said that they were making the Word of God of no effect by their tradition which had been handed down (Mark 7:13). In other words, they were invalidating or negating the Word of God by their traditions. Jesus had warned His disciples: "**Watch out and beware of the leaven [teaching] of the Pharisees and Sadducees**" (Matthew 16:6 [16:11]).

This was a most serious matter in Jesus' and John's day, and John was prophesying that it would become a greater problem over 1,400 years later, only in this case, it was not the Jewish leaders doing it but the church leaders of the institutional, apparent church.

Whereas Ezekiel went to the lost ten tribes of Israel with the word, John, as the representative of the apostolic ministry and the conquerors to follow, took (representatively) the word to **many peoples and nations and tongues and kings**. This also speaks to the fact that the story was not ending at this point in history; there was more to come that would involve the whole world, not just the Roman world of that day.