

Hebrews 1:1-3: In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

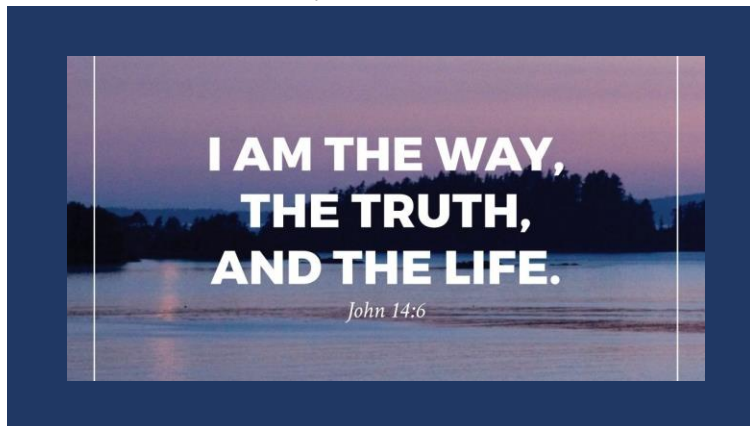
**The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.**

The God of the Bible has made himself known to humankind – he does so in the creation...in his breathed-out word which he spoke to his prophets, who then wrote it down... and in the person of Jesus Christ.

Through the prophet Isaiah God said of himself, 45:19 –



Jesus said of himself, John 14:6...



Jesus identified the Holy Spirit, John 16:13, as being...



Rob Brezsny said....

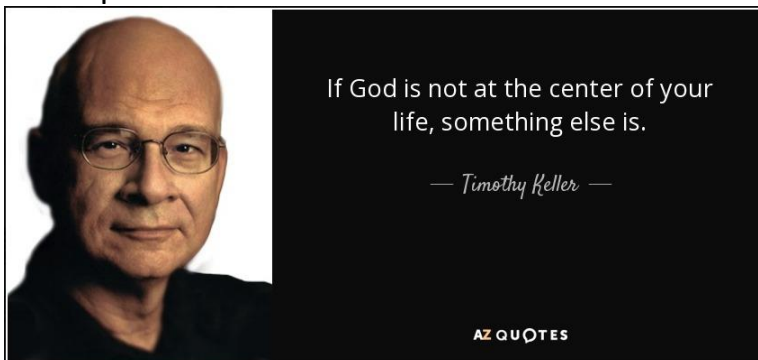
IN ITS WILD STATE, THE TRUTH  
IS FLUID, SLIPPERY, VAGRANT,  
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KALEIDOSCOPIC, AND  
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- ROB BREZSNY -

I have to graciously.... disagree with Mr. Brezsny because...

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...we learn from God's Word that truth is not fluid, but fixed... that is, it is rooted in the person of the triune God.



Those who live in relationship with God – by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone – center their lives in God's person and the word he has spoken.

In the OT time God communicated through his prophets.  
Do you know why he did so?

Following their rescue from Egypt, the nation of Israel journeyed to Mt. Sinai.



There God appeared on the mountain and all the people saw him descend in fire and all heard the voice of God speak...and everyone in the camp trembled with fear.

The leading men of the tribes... and the elders came to Moses and this was their request – Deuteronomy 5:24-27.

Deuteronomy 5:24-27: “The LORD our God has shown us his glory and his majesty, and we have heard his voice from the fire. Today we have seen that a person can live even if God speaks with them. <sup>25</sup> But now, why should we die? This great fire will consume us, and we will die if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer.

<sup>26</sup> For what mortal has ever heard the voice of the living God speaking out of fire, as we have, and survived?

<sup>27</sup> Go near and listen to all that the LORD our God says. Then tell us whatever the LORD our God tells you. We will listen and obey.”

This is why... from Moses onward, throughout the time of the OT, God called individuals to himself and designated them as prophets...individuals who would listen to his voice and then speak on his behalf to whomever God sent them.

Jesus entered the world to be...

## Jesus Christ, the faithful witness

Revelation 1:5

After his death, resurrection and return to his Father's home... the task to be a faithful witness who speaks for God is now the calling of all who follow Jesus.

John and the believers of that day knew the calling to be a witness was both difficult and dangerous.

**Revelation 10 intentionally inspires and motivates the followers of Jesus to persevere...in spite of difficulty, in spite of danger... in being a people who faithfully speak on God's behalf...**



When God created all that is... seen and unseen... he created two races of personal beings – angels and humans.

In the first nine chapters of the Revelation, we have repeatedly read of God's holy angels – identified by Hebrews 1:13-14...

## HEBREWS 1:13-14

And to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

... as... "ministering spirits" sent to serve... "those who are to inherit salvation."

In chapter 10 **John saw in a vision a mighty angel and then describes this angel ... and the interactions he had with him... and the message this angel had from God for John.**

The Revelation repeatedly impresses upon the reader that just as God involves redeemed humanity in his ongoing work of rescue here on the earth, so also, the holy angels are involved in implementing the salvation won by Jesus on the cross.

- **John saw a mighty angel...**

- robed in a cloud
- a rainbow above his head
- face was like the sun
- legs were like fiery pillars
- right foot on the sea; left foot on the land
- shouted like the roar of a lion
- raised his right hand to heaven

- **John heard the voice of this mighty angel...**

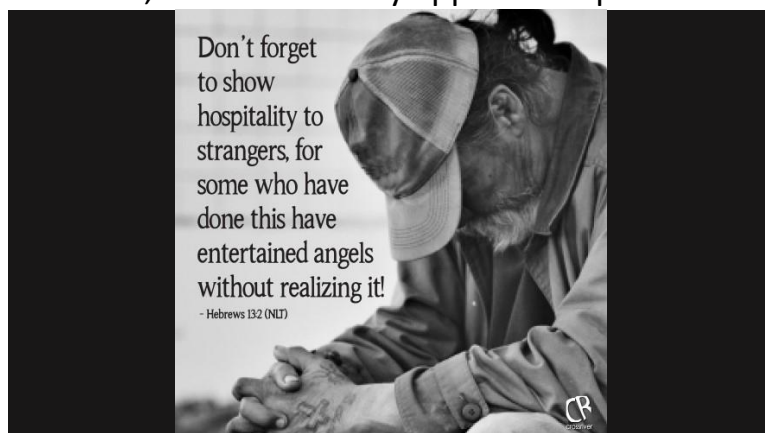
- ...**the conversation** he had with the seven thunders.
- ...**the oath** he spoke...
- ...**the testimony** he gave...

- **John spoke with this mighty angel...**

- **The mighty angel spoke with John...**

The testimony of the Bible is that angels typically remain unseen.

That said, sometimes they appear to a person as a stranger in need of hospitality



Sometimes they appear in a dream, as was the case with Joseph, Mary's husband



see Matthew 1:20.

And sometimes they are seen in a vision like the one John had.

When God chooses to allow a person to see an angel it is for a particular reason.

Do you remember the story of Elisha in 2 Kings 6?

The king of Aram sent a sizeable military force to arrest Elisha who at that time was living in a town called Dothan.

Elisha's servant got up early one day and discovered...the entire city was surrounded.

With great fear he asked Elisha, "What shall we do?"

Elisha told him...

**"Don't be afraid, those who are with us  
are more than those who are with them."  
2 Kings 6:16**

Then Elisha prayed and asked the LORD that his servant might be allowed to see the unseen.

Elijah's prayer was answer immediately and the servant **"saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."**

**Seeing the unseen army of God emboldened the faith of Elisha's servant.**

In the Revelation, John has witnessed the impact of the opening of the seven seals; he has seen the terrible trumpet plagues and the devastation which the first six brought about upon the earth.

As John has watched, he has seen, not once, but twice, the hardness of heart of unrepentant humankind, who try to hide from the presence of the One on the throne and the Lamb, and who refuse to stop worshiping demons and idols and who will not turn from their sinful practices.

John is about to be recommissioned at the end of chapter 10 to continue bearing witness to the gospel, prophesying to many peoples, nations, languages and kings, that the risen Lord Jesus reigns from heaven over the earth and will soon return and when he does the kingdom of this world will become his kingdom.

Based on what he has already been shown, John knows that his task will not be an easy one.

However, this vision of the mighty angel was given to encourage John as it encourages the church of Jesus in every generation, **“...to not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”**

- **Why is this so important?**
- Why is the reader reminded of the role of angels in the work of salvation?
- **Why was John reminded that the One on the throne lives forever and ever?**
- Why did the angel emphasize God being the Creator of heaven, earth, the sea and everything in it?
- **Why did the angel declare that the mystery of God will be accomplished just as God had announced it?**

Eugene Peterson says, “Ordinary Christian conversation needs to be in touch with the rich, vibrant reality of the supernatural, the invisible vitalities of God” ... p.105

The scenes seen in the Revelation are intended to awaken the believer’s imagination to the incredible beauty and wisdom and power of God.

When we perceive the One who is on the throne... we are reminded...

**there is nothing that our God cannot do.**



There are several details in chapter ten we need to clarify or explain.

- When the mighty angel shouted, the seven thunders spoke – v.3-4.

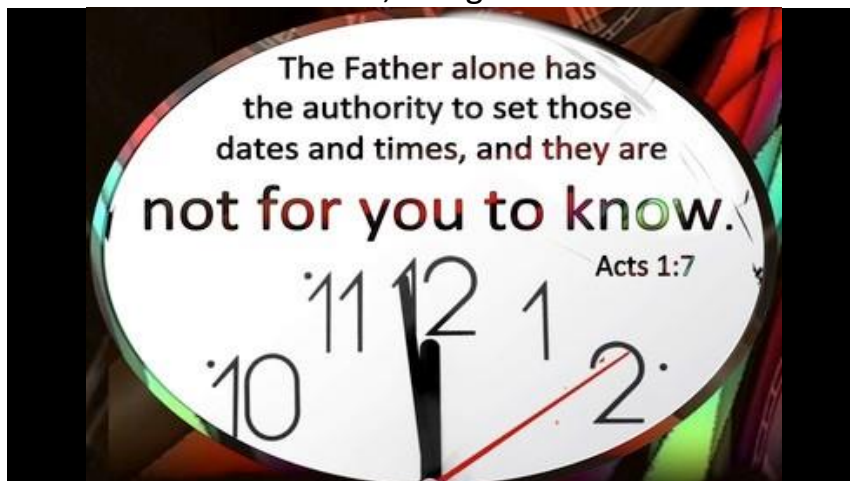
It is interesting to note that John understood what the seven thunders said. So why would the Spirit guide him to write that he heard them speak... and then a voice from heaven tell him not to write down what they said?

Gerhard Krodel says, **The Revelation does not contain all that there is to know about the end. Just as the gospels do not tell us everything Jesus said and did, so the Revelation is not an exhaustive detailing of what will happen in the last days or on the last day.** p.213

Jesus had told his followers days before his death....



Just before his ascension, he again told them... Acts 1:7...



There are things we are not meant to know.

But what we have been told is sufficient; it is enough.

While John was told... not to write what the seven thunders spoke, the same voice that he had heard from heaven, told him, **v.8 – Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land.**

- **What is the scroll?**

We are not told.

But it does seem to be different than the sealed scroll which the Lamb took and opened in Revelation 5-6.

What we do know is that this little scroll contains the gospel message, the prophetic word John is to keep on speaking.

- **Who opened this scroll held by the angel?**

We are not told but we can assume that it was Jesus.

- **What was the testimony of the mighty angel?**

**v.6 - There will be no more delay!**

Delay of what?

It would seem the angel is speaking of the return of Jesus to the earth.

The finishing of the salvation Jesus began in the redeemed.

The making of all things new.

**v.7 - "...the mystery of God will be accomplished..."**

What is this mystery?

Eight different passages in the NT speak of this mystery.

Romans 16:25  
1 Corinthians 2:7-16  
Ephesians 1:9-10; 3:4-12  
Colossians 1:24-28; 2:3; 4:2-6  
1 Timothy 3:14-16

The mystery is how God himself, in the person of Jesus redeems a people from every people group, adopting them as his family; and how he will reverse all that sin and death ruined.

- **Why does the angel tell John to eat the scroll?**

The message of the gospel must be internalized by those who bear witness to it. The gospel becomes a part of who we are – it is not just facts we know. This is why we the church; the people of God continually and intentionally preach the gospel, not only to others, but also to ourselves.

**We do so when we gather to worship** – this is why the songs we sing are gospel-focused, gospel-saturate; why the teaching is from the word of God; why our prayers are in the name of the triune God and in recognition of his authority and sovereignty.

**We do so when we gather in little communities to study the word and spur one another on spiritually.** It is here in the context of relationship with other followers of Jesus we work out our faith and put it into practice.

**We do so when we gather in ministry teams to serve others in the name of Jesus.**

The Spirit of God has birthed in us a new nature. It is in ministry teams, as we work alongside fellow believers that this servant nature has opportunity to grow and develop.

Until the day Jesus returns, or we pass from this life into his presence, the gospel is actively transforming our lives – making our character and our practices to be increasingly like that of our Savior.

- **Why did the eating of the scroll, which was initially sweet, turn John's stomach sour?**

This points the reader back to the prophet Ezekiel, 2:8-3:3...God told him...

Ezekiel 2:8-3:3:

“Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have been in revolt against me to this very day. <sup>4</sup> The people to whom I am sending you are obstinate and stubborn. Say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says.’ <sup>5</sup> And whether they listen or fail to listen—for they are a rebellious people—they will know that a prophet has been among them. <sup>6</sup> And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them or their words.

Ezekiel 2:8-3:3

Do not be afraid, though briars and thorns are all around you and you live among scorpions. Do not be afraid of what they say or be terrified by them, though they are a rebellious people. <sup>7</sup> You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or fail to listen, for they are rebellious. <sup>8</sup> But you, son of man, listen to what I say to you. Do not rebel like that rebellious people; open your mouth and eat what I give you.” <sup>9</sup> Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out to me. In it was a scroll,

Ezekiel 2:8-3:3

<sup>10</sup> which he unrolled before me. On both sides of it were written words of lament and mourning and woe. <sup>3</sup> And he said to me, “Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the people of Israel.” <sup>2</sup> So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat. <sup>3</sup> Then he said to me, “Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.” So, I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth.

When a follower of Jesus feeds on the word of God and incorporates it into the core of their being... that word of God... is sweet and it nourishes them.  
See also Jeremiah 15:16

### **Why then did the stomach of John turn sour when he ate God's word?**

Because the gospel he was to proclaim... would be rejected by some who listened to John.

John and all who read the Revelation have already seen this at the end of the opening of the sixth seal and the sounding of the sixth trumpet.  
And it will happen again when the sixth bowl is poured out.

For the follower of Jesus to continue being a faithful witness requires perseverance...because while we experience great joy in seeing a sinner saved... remember what Jesus said about heaven rejoicing... there is also great sorrow when a person rejects Jesus Christ.

**My own experience... of our neighbors in Ottawa; of family members.**

### **How does the follower of Jesus deal with this feeling of sickness in their soul?**

- we focus our hearts and minds on the One who sits on the throne and on Jesus, the Lion who is the Lamb of God.
- we remember that the triune God lives forever.
- we remember our God created everything that is.
- we remember that he will bring to completion what was accomplished at the cross of Christ.
- we remember that his will... will be done on the earth as it is in heaven
- we remember that until a person breathes their last breath, there is time to repent, and so there is hope

**As we wrap up, I remind you of several points of connection and application to our lives.**

- As followers of Jesus the resources of heaven are available to us. The holy angels of God and the super-abounding grace of God are always enough. We are never alone; never under-supplied; never forgotten. God supplies us with what we need to be on mission with him.

- The antidote to fear is not the absence of scary things, but a profound and deep awareness of who is with us.

**“those with us are more”  
“the One in us is greater”**

- Time is short.  
Jesus is coming soon.

- God does not tell us everything, but we know enough.  
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, that we may do all the words of this law.

- While we have breath, our calling is to keep speaking...to be a faithful witness.