

## The Book Of Revelation Study 48

We want to remind ourselves this evening that we are about to look at an interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpet blast.

And as we look at this interlude we will find five unusual features;

1. **An unusual angel**
2. **An unusual act**
3. **An unusual answer**
4. **An unusual announcement**
5. **An unusual assignment**

And so this evening we want to start with the first of the five

### AN UNUSUAL ANGEL

*Rev 10:1-2a*

*<sup>1</sup> I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire.*

*<sup>2</sup> He had a little book open in his hand.*

As it does throughout Revelation the words, “*I saw*” marks the beginning of a new vision.

Following his vision of the first six trumpets (8:6-9:21), John saw a vision of someone he had heretofore not seen.

Now I mentioned in our last study that this strong angel was typical of Jesus Christ the Lamb Slain and is considered by many to be the Lord even though he is called an angel.

This **strong angel** is distinct from the seven angels who sound the seven trumpets.

Noting the similarities between his description and that of Christ in (1:12-17), and that he, like Christ, descends in a cloud (*chpt 1:7*), has caused many to identify this angel as Jesus Christ.

But after further study we see several factors that argue against that identification.

**First**, the use of *allos* (another of the same kind) identifies this angel as one exactly like the previously mentioned trumpet angels.

If Christ were being referred to here, the word *heteros* (another of a different kind) would be expected, since Christ is essentially different from angels.

Christ could not be described as an angel exactly like the other angels, since they are created and He is the uncreated, eternal God.

**Second**, whenever Jesus Christ appears in Revelation John gives Him an unmistakable title.

He is called the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. (1:5) The son of man (1:13), The first and the last (1:17), the living One (1:18), The Son of God (2:18), He who is holy and true (3:7), the amen, the faithful and true witness. The beginning of the creation of God (3:14), the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the root of David (5:5), the Lamb (6:1, 16; 7:17; 8:10), Faithful and True (19:11), The Word of God (19:13), and “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords” (19:16).

It is reasonable to assume that if Christ were the angel in view here He would be distinctly identified.

**Third**, other strong angels, who clearly cannot be identified with Christ, appear in Revelation (5:2; 18:21)

Since other angels are so designated, there is no compelling reason to associate that title with Jesus Christ.

Further, while the pre-incarnate Christ appeared in the Old Testament as the Angel of the Lord, the New Testament nowhere refers to Him as an angel.

**Fourth**, it is inconceivable that Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, could make the oath that his angel makes in verses 5 and 6:

*Rev 10:5-6*

*<sup>5</sup> The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven*

*<sup>6</sup> and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer,*

*Heb 6:13*

*<sup>13</sup> For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,*

Since Jesus is God, the risen, glorified Lord Jesus Christ then, would have sworn by Himself

**Finally**, this angel **came down out of heaven** to the earth.

To identify him as Christ is to add another coming of Christ to the earth unforeseen elsewhere in Scripture, one that is not in accord with biblical descriptions of the Second Coming.

*(Matt. 24:30; 25:31; 2Thess 1:7-8).*

Other angels described in Scripture have the same splendor that this angel has;

We have a description of Satan’s glorious angelic appearance before his rebellion against God.

*Ezek 28:11-15*

*<sup>11</sup> Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,*

*<sup>12</sup> "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.*

*<sup>13</sup> You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created.*

*<sup>14</sup> "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God;*

*You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.*

*15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.*

Daniel saw a vision of an angel, whom he described;

*Dan 10:5-6*

*5 I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz!*

*6 His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.*

We know that this angel was not the pre-incarnate Christ from the fact that he requires Michael's help to battle demons, v13

*Dan 10:13*

*13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.*

Having introduced this powerful angel, John describes his spectacular attire;

He was clothed with a cloud. He was wearing the drapery of the sky over his mighty shoulders. That symbolizes his power, majesty, and glory, and the fact that he comes bringing judgment.

Clouds are associated with the second coming of Christ in Judgment in *(1:7; 14:14-16; Matt 24:30; Mark 13:26; 14:62 and Luke 21:27)*

John also saw a **rainbow upon his head**, *Iris* (rainbow) was the Greek goddess who personified the rainbow, and served as a messenger of the gods.

In classical Greek *Iris* was used to describe any bright halo surrounding another object, such as the circle surrounding the eyes of a peacock's tail, or the iris of an eye.

Here it describes the brilliant, many-colored rainbow around the angel's head that reflects his glorious splendor.

The same word is used in chapter 4:3 to describe the rainbow that encircled the throne of God.

While the cloud symbolizes judgment, the rainbow represents God's covenant mercy in the midst of judgment (as it did in 4:3).

After the flood, God gave the rainbow as a sign of His promise never again to destroy the world by water. *(Gen 9:12-16)*

The rainbow with which the angel is crowned will reassure God's people of His mercy in the midst of coming judgments.

Read Malachi to see this duality of God's covenant promise of mercy to His people in the midst of judgment;

*Malachi 3:16-4:2*

*16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name.*

*17 "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."*

*18 Then you shall again discern Between the righteous and the wicked, Between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him.*

*1 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch.*

*2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.*

Moving on to describe the angel's appearance, John notes first of all that **his face was like the sun** (18:1)

*Rev 18:1*

*1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory*

His brilliant, radiant, glory, far surpassing that of Moses, lit up the earth like the blazing noonday **sun**. Yet even that brilliance is but a pale reflection of the Shechinah glory of God, "who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see"

*1Tim 6:16*

*He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,*

*16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.*

For as He said to Moses;

*Ex 33:20*

*20 But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."*

The same pure glory shone from the face of the exalted Lord Jesus in (1:16)

John next described the angel's **feet** and legs as being **like** firm, stable, immovable **pillars of fire**.

That symbolizes his unbending holiness in stamping out his judgment on the earth, pictured here as **fire** that consumes the ungodly

*Mal 4:1*

*1 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch.*

some argue that the use of *biblaridion* (**little book**) in verse 2 distinguishes this book from the *biblion* (**book**) of chapter 5:1.

But that reasoning overlooks the fact that *biblaridion* is the diminutive form of *biblion*, and that *biblion* is used to describe the **little book** in *10:8*

Rather than distinguishing this book from the one in chapter 5, the diminutive form merely adds a further description of it in this vision.

The book needed to be made smaller for the sake of the symbolism of this vision, since John was to eat it.

The use of the perfect participle *heneogmenon* (**which was open**) emphasizes the idea of the scroll being open; having been opened is to remain open.

That further identifies it with the now fully unrolled scroll of *5:1*.

The little book lying open in this unusual angel's hand unveils all the terrors of divine judgment yet to come.