

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The Strong Angel and the Little Book

Revelation 10

1. _____
There is a significant discussion whether this strong angel is a created holy angel or whether it is the Lord Jesus Christ. While it is possible that this might be an angel, I believe this angel is the Lord Jesus Christ. Below are the primary reasons why many faithful teachers believe this to be a holy angel and my responses to those reasons:

- A. This angel comes down, stands on the earth, but Christ's return is still future. It is true that the Lord Jesus Christ will return to the earth once (Rev. 20:11ff). I do not believe that the Son descending and standing upon the earth in a vision is comparable to His future bodily return.
- B. Jesus would not make an oath in this way (cf. Rev. 10:6). God would swear by no one else because no one is greater, and so He would swear by Himself (cf. Heb. 6:13). However, I do not believe that it is a violation of this principle for one Divine Person to swear by or testify of another Divine Person (cf. Dan. 10:5-6; 12:7; John 5:31-32).
- C. "Another" refers to something of the same kind; God is unlike any creature. The word for "another" is ἄλλος (allos) and it is very often used to describe another thing of the same kind whereas ἕτερος (heteros) is often used to describe another thing of a different kind. John only uses ἕτερος one time, and it is to contrast two things of the same kind (John 19:37), and ἄλλος can be used to describe something of a different kind (2 Cor. 11:4). So while there are other "strong angels" who are definitely not the Son (Rev. 5:2), "another" does not exclude the possibility of this being a reference to the Son of God.

D. Whenever Jesus is in view in Revelation, it is clear. Here it is not clear. It is true that in some places where Jesus is in view it is more clear (cf. Rev. 5:6ff) than others (Rev. 14:14ff). Except for when the Son is worshipped (cf. Rev. 5:8) or otherwise given direct attestation of who He is (Rev. 22:16), the clarity of whether or not Jesus is in view depends upon how closely the descriptions of Him match the rest of Scripture's description of God. The descriptions of this strong angel are very explicitly descriptions given to God (Dan. 7:13-14; Ezek 1:26-28; Hosea 11:10; Amos 3:8)

2. _____
The seven peals of thunder are most likely angles who are given tasks of participating in pouring out of God's judgment in a similar way to the angels who blow trumpets (Rev. 8:2) or pour out bowls (Rev. 15:7). God has given this revelation to John for the specific purpose of disclosing what He will do (Rev. 1:19). We have been given so much majestic information about the time of the end, with much of being difficult to clearly understand, that we should not dwell too long upon those things which God has expressly hidden from our knowledge (cf. Deut 29:29; Matt 24:36).
3. _____
The oath that this strong angel makes indicates that the culmination to God's plan will not be delayed any longer (v.6; cf. Rev. 6:9-11). The one swearing the oath does so on the basis of God Himself as identified in what He has done (cf. Dan. 12:7). The connection with the vision given to Daniel and its description of the fulfillment of the end of God's judgment (Dan. 12:7; cf. Dan. 10-12).
4. _____
The scroll in the hand of the strong angel (Rev. 10:2) is the book that is in the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ as He opens it (Rev. 5:7). This is the book which contains the judgments of God upon the earth and the final establishment of His glorious reign in the millennium and beyond. At this point in his visions, John has seen what must have appeared to be the utter devastation of all creation, but he has much more to say concerning the end which will contain the sweetness of God's utter victory mingled with the continuing bitterness of man's rebellion (cf. Jer. 2:19; 4:18).