

# REVELATION CHAPTER 10

## THE SWEET AND BITTER TASK AND THE FINAL VICTORY

The sweet task is proclaiming the good news about salvation to the penitent.  
The difficult task is proclaiming God's warning about judgement to the impenitent.  
The message "must" be proclaimed!  
God's eternal plan of salvation and judgement will be accomplished!

### PART 1. Revelation 10:1-3a. THE ANGEL.

#### **(1) Explanation of the symbols.**

**10:1** And (then) I saw (*Greek: horao, opsomai, eidon, heoraka*)(*aorist*) another mighty (*Greek: ischuros*) angel coming down (*Greek: katabaino*)(*present*) from heaven (*Greek: ouranos*). This angel resembles Christ, but is not Christ. In his spirit, John is again on the earth. In a vision he sees a giant angel coming down from heaven. The vision of this angel resembles the vision of Christ in Revelation chapter 1. This angel is thus closely associated with Christ's rule of the world, which consists of judgement and salvation, but he is not Christ, because Christ is not called "an angel" in the book of Revelation.

In Revelation 5:2 John saw and heard a mighty angel, who was clearly distinct from Christ (5:5-6). In Revelation 10:1 he sees *another* mighty angel, who is coming down from heaven where Christ sits on the throne (5:1,6). The time Christ himself will come down from heaven will be at his second coming (1:7; Matthew 24:30)! John did not worship this angel as he did when he saw Christ (1:17). This angel is sent by God and swears by God, just as the angel in Daniel 10:11 and 12:7. This angel swears by God (10:5-6), but Jesus Christ does not swear by God (cf. Matthew 5:33-37), because he is God (Colossians 1:15). Thus, this mighty angel is not Christ.

He was robed (*Greek: periballo*)(*perfect*) in a cloud (*Greek: nephele*). The cloud is a symbol of either the presence of God (Deuteronomy 1:33; 31:15) or of the chariot of God (cf. 1:7; 11:12; 14:14; Psalm 104:3; Daniel 7:13; Matthew 24:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:17) and symbolises God's coming in *judgement* (1:7; Psalm 97:2-5; Matthew 24:30-31).

with a rainbow (*Greek: iris*) above his head. The rainbow symbolises his exalted position as coming from the throne of God (4:3) and the character of his work as representing God's *mercy and covenant faithfulness* for his people (Genesis 9:16).

His face (was) like the sun (*Greek: helios*). The sun symbolises the radiance of God's *holiness* (cf. 1:16; 18:1; Daniel 10:6).

his legs (*Greek: pous, podos*) (were) like fiery pillars (*Greek: stulos*). These symbolise God's *strength* to execute judgement (cf. 1:15; Daniel 10:6).

#### **(2) Different views about the angel (10:1).**

A futurist view. The angel is Christ (Larkin)<sup>1</sup>.

The correct explanation. The mighty angel is an angel closely associated with Christ's rule of the world, which consists of judgement and salvation.<sup>2</sup>

### PART 2. Revelation 10:2. THE LITTLE SCROLL.

#### **(1) Explanation of the symbols.**

**10:2 and having (holding) (present)** a little scroll (*Greek: beblaridion*). The angel held a little scroll in his hand. In Revelation 10:2 the book is called "a little scroll" or "a little book" (*Greek: biblaridion*), a threefold diminutive of the word "book" (*Greek: biblos*). But in Revelation 10:8 it is called "a scroll" or "a book" (*Greek: biblion*), just as the seven sealed scroll in Revelation 5:1, because it contains a small part of the contents of the seven sealed scroll. It symbolises the gospel in which God's mystery of salvation and judgement of all nations is revealed; its working in the world; and about which John must again prophesy (10:11). The gospel is a part of God's complete plan for his creation and human history. It is very important, because it is the message of salvation and hope for all people who believe and a warning of judgement for those who continue in unbelief (John 3:16-18,36).

which lay open (*Greek: anoigo*)(*perfect*) in his hand. The scroll lay open in the angel's hand, signifying that its content is destined to be revealed and its message should be made known to all people. The apostle John during his lifetime 2000 years ago already had "to prophesy *again* about many peoples, nations, languages and kings". The content of the little scroll *has already been made known* since Christ's first coming! It is a message intended for the whole New Testament period from Christ's first coming to Christ's second coming. Its contents are certainly not limited to some future period of time.

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<sup>1</sup> Larkin, Revelation p. 81

<sup>2</sup> Hendriksen p.149

and he planted (*Greek: tithemi, theso, etheka*)(*aorist*) his right (*Greek: dexion*) foot on the sea and his left (*Greek: euonumos*) foot on the land. This symbolises his colossal size and enormous power. It symbolises that he has power over the sea and land and all life in and on it. His word and work will affect everything that lives.

**10:3** and he cried (*Greek: krazo*)(*aorist*) a loud shout (*Greek: phone*) like (*Greek: osper*) a lion roaring (*Greek: mukaomai*)(*present*). The angel speaks here as the mouth of God himself (Hosea 11:10; Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2: 3:8). What he said is not revealed. He probably commanded the seven thunders to make themselves heard. His speaking was majestic and awe-inspiring. His message concerned the entire universe and must be heard by all.

**(2) Different views about the scroll** (10:2).

A futurist view. The little scroll contains things that were not to be revealed until the time of the end, *during the second half of the future tribulation period*: about the future great tribulation and about the future millennial kingdom. This little book is *probably* the book which Daniel was told to seal up (Daniel 12:4,9), which contained things that were not to be revealed until “the time of the end” (Larkin)<sup>3</sup>.

The correct explanation. The little scroll symbolises the message in which God’s mystery of salvation and judgement of all nations is revealed; its working in the world; and about which John must again prophesy. The little scroll does not contain a sealed up message for the distant future or an exclusive message about Jews. It lies open in the hand of the angel from the time of John and is intended to be read and its contents to be made known (to be prophesied, proclaimed). It contains a revealed message for the whole New Testament period from Christ’s first coming to Christ’s second coming and is a universal message for all people in the world living in this period. It is a message that brings good news (the gospel) for those who repent, but it is also a message that warns about the coming judgement for those who do not repent. The proclamation of the gospel gives great joy (sweet), but the experience of opposition and persecution for the sake of the gospel is difficult (bitter) (Hendriksen)<sup>4</sup>.

#### PART 3. Revelation 10:3b-4. THE SEVEN THUNDERS.

**(1) Explanation of the symbols.**

and when he shouted (*Greek: krazo*)(*aorist*), the seven thunders (*Greek: bronte*) spoke (*Greek: laleo*)(*aorist*) with their own (*Greek: heoutos*) voices (sound)(*Greek: phone*). In answer to the angel’s shout, the voices of the seven thunders spoke in words that John understood. They symbolise the voice of God making seven distinct revelations (Psalm 29:1-11).

**10:4** And when the seven thunders spoke (*aorist*), I was about (*Greek: mello*)(*imperfect*) to write (*Greek: grapho*)(*present*); but I heard (*aorist*) a voice from heaven say (*present*), “Seal up (*Greek: sphragizo*)(*imperative, aorist*) what the seven thunders have said (*aorist*) and do not *begin to write* (*Greek: grapho*)(*subjunctive, ingressive aorist*) it down. John was commanded not to write these revelations down, but to seal them up. Sealing them up means that their content must not be disclosed (5:1; Isaiah 29:11). Thus John had to proclaim and make known what was written in the small book, but had to seal up what the seven thunders revealed.

The seven thunders are other undisclosed principles that operate in God’s creation and the history of man. The meaning is that besides the seven lampstands, seven seals, seven trumpets and seven bowls, there are seven thunders, that is, other “principles” that operate in the universe and other forces that are at work in world-history, which God has not (or not yet) revealed to us. Whatever God has revealed is enough for our salvation and life. Whatever he has not revealed belongs only to God and to no human. Whatever God has not revealed we also need not know (Deuteronomy 29:29)! These things are God’s judgements that are unsearchable and God’s paths that are beyond tracing (Romans 11:33; Isaiah 55:8-9). These things are the inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell (2 Corinthians 12:4).

God has not revealed to us all the factors and agencies that determine life now or in the future. Therefore, we must be careful in making predictions regarding the future, because we may be leaving out a very important undisclosed factor!

**(2) Different views about the seven thunders** (10:3b-4).

A first view. The seven thunders are other undisclosed judgements or terrors, more than those revealed in Revelation chapter 8 and 9, that must be expected (Grijdanus)<sup>5</sup>.

The best explanation. The seven thunders are other undisclosed principles that operate in God’s creation and the history of man. They add to the delay or the slowing down of the apocalyptic events that lead to the fulfilment of the end-time (Hendriksen)<sup>6</sup>.

#### PART 4. Revelation 10:5-6. THE ANGEL SWEARING BY GOD.

**(1) Explanation of the symbols.**

**10:5 And (then) the** angel I had seen (*aorist*) standing (*Greek: histemi, steso, esteka, hesteka*)(*perfect*) on the sea and on the land raised (*Greek: airo, aro, era, erka*)(*aorist*) his right hand to heaven.

<sup>3</sup> Larkin, Revelation pp. 81-82

<sup>4</sup> Hendriksen p. 151

<sup>5</sup> Grijdanus p. 164

<sup>6</sup> Hendriksen pp. 149-150

**10:6** and he swore (*Greek: omnumi, omosa*)(*aorist*) by him who lives (*Greek: zao*)(*present*) for ever and ever, who created (*Greek: ktizo*)(*aorist*) the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it. Raising the right hand to heaven was the customary method of swearing (Genesis 14:22; Daniel 10:6; Daniel 12:7). The angel swears by God, who is eternal and unchangeable, the One on whom everything created depends.

In Matthew 5:33-37 Jesus Christ does not condemn making an oath that uses the name of God. He condemns swearing falsely (Leviticus 19:12). He condemns lies and insincerity in making promises. "A man must not break his word but must do everything he said" (Numbers 30:2). A man must not be slow to fulfil his vow to the Lord (Deuteronomy 23:21). When God swears an oath he will not revoke it (Psalm 132:11). When God makes a promise and confirms it with an oath, he stresses the fact that it is impossible for him to lie (Hebrews 6:16-18). When the Pharisees and teachers of the law swore an oath, they said that an oath to the Lord must be kept, but an oath for example by heaven, by the earth, by Jerusalem or by the temple means nothing (cf. Matthew 23:16-22). Jesus Christ condemned these hair-splitting distinctions in classifying oaths as binding, as not so binding and as not binding at all. Jesus Christ demands truthfulness and sincerity in the promises and oaths people make. Therefore Jesus Christ teaches that in everyday conversation Christians should not swear at all. Christians should not have to say more than "yes" or "no" when "yes" or "no" is intended. All their promises and statements must be truthful, dependable and sincere.

(quote)(*Greek: hoti*): "There will *certainly* be (*future*) no more (*Greek: ouketi*) time (meaning: delay)(*Greek: chronos*)! Some interpret "Time (*Greek: chronos*) will be no more". The word means "time, respite, delay". In Revelation 2:21, Christ gave the prophetess "time" or "a delay of time, respite" in order to repent. And in Revelation 10:6 it means that "there will be no more a delay of time, no more respite". While in Revelation 6:11 the martyred saints had "to wait a little longer", in Revelation 10:6-7 there will be no more delay. God's patience has a limit (Genesis 6:3) and will come to an end. The final judgement day is about to come! The final judgement day will come when the seventh angel blows his trumpet. Then "the mystery of God will be accomplished", that is, then God's eternal decree or purposes will be fulfilled.

#### PART 5. Revelation 10:7. THE MYSTERY OF GOD.

##### **(1) Explanation of the symbols.**

###### THE MYSTERY

**10:7** But in the days of the sound of the seventh (*Greek: hebdomos*) angel, when he is about (*Greek: mello*) (*subjunctive, present*) to sound his trumpet (*Greek: salpizo*)(*present*), the mystery (*Greek: musterion*) of God will be accomplished (*Greek: teleo*)(*aorist in the sense of a futurum exactum*) just as he announced (*Greek: euaggelizo*) (*aorist*) to his servants (*Greek: doulos*) the prophets. God has designed and determined his plan for the course of world history (Isaiah 14:24,27). No one can look into "the scroll sealed with seven seals" containing his eternal plan (counsel, decree)(5:3). Only Christ reveals and executes God's eternal plan. Although God reveals certain things about his plan, in both the Old Testament Scriptures and the New Testament Scriptures (including the book of Revelation), nevertheless, much of God's plan will remain hidden. "The mystery of God" refers to *God's decree concerning salvation and judgement in world-history*, which is not entirely unknown, but would have remained unknown if God had not revealed it! It is known only because God revealed it!

###### THE MYSTERY DURING THE OLD TESTAMENT PERIOD

The mystery of God had been announced as gospel or good tidings (**Greek: euaggelizo**)(*aorist*) to his servants, the prophets during the Old Testament period (Amos 3:7; cf. Galatians 3:6-8) and it had begun to be fulfilled by his apostles during the New Testament period. In Romans 16:25-26, the mystery is God's revealed counsel especially concerning salvation (and judgement) to all nations. It was hidden during the earlier ages of world-history, was partly revealed in the Old Testament prophetic scriptures from which Paul quotes (Romans 1:2; Romans 3:21; Romans 11:25-26) and is now by the preaching of the gospel revealed and made known to all the nations.

The gathering of the nations through the proclamation of Jesus Christ (the gospel) had been foretold in the Old Testament. The promise was given to Abraham (Genesis 12:3; 22:18), was unfolded progressively and became a refrain in the Psalms (Psalm 2:8; 22:27-28; 45:6-7,17; 67:1-5; 72:11-14,17; 82:8; 86:9; 96:1-10, etc.) and Isaiah (Isaiah 42:1-5; 49:6; 51:4-6; 52:10; 55:5; 56:3-8; 65:1).

###### THE MYSTERY DURING THE NEW TESTAMENT PERIOD

Only with the actual first coming of Jesus Christ and the consequent breaking down of the dividing wall between Jewish and Gentile believers, did the implication become apparent and this promise begin to bear much fruit (Ephesians 2:11-22).

"The mystery" is that through the proclamation of Christ (the gospel) the believers from the Gentile nations are on complete equal terms:

- heirs together with the believers from Israel (God's Old Testament people)
- members together of the one Body of Christ (the Church, God's New Testament people)
- and sharers together in the (covenant) promise in Christ Jesus which makes the God of the Bible their God and them the people of God (Ephesians 3:2-6).

"The mystery" of God is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 1:25-27; 2:2-3).

The prophetic scriptures of the Old Testament were not the property of all the Gentile nations until the gospel went into all the world in accordance with Christ's command and the Holy Spirit's power (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). With this worldwide proclamation of the gospel, the Old Testament Scriptures have become the property of all the nations without distinction. Through the medium of the Old Testament Scriptures and the proclamation of the gospel (the New Testament Scriptures) "the mystery of God" is made known to all the nations (Jews and Gentiles, cf. Rom 1:16; Rom 16:25-26 from Christ's first coming to Christ's second coming.

#### THE MYSTERY AT THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

The mystery of God, that is, God's plan of salvation and judgement that determines all world history including God's hidden purposes, will reach its culmination and complete revelation in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, that is, on the final judgement day at Christ's second coming!

When the seventh trumpet is blown, the mystery of God will once for all time be accomplished or better, "*will at that point have been carried out completely*". The future is spoken of as if it has already happened! This is the language of faith. The purposes of God will certainly be carried out and will at that time have been carried out completely. God's eternal purpose, at which everything today is directed (Isaiah 14:24,27; Ephesians 1:9-11), will then have been accomplished. The mystery of God refers to *God's decree concerning salvation and judgement that determines all world history.*

When the seventh trumpet is blown, then everything God has *prophesied* and *promised* throughout history will come to its final fulfilment. Then there will be complete understanding of God's decree concerning this present world history as well as concerning eternity. Then the one and only second coming will take place. Then all opposition will have been crushed (20:10; cf. 1 Cor 15:25). Then the one and only resurrection from the dead will take place (20:12-13; cf. John 5:28; 1 Corinthians 15:22-23). Then the one and only final judgement will take place (20:11-15; cf. John 5:29), where all God's people will be publicly acknowledged and completely saved and all the wicked will be publicly condemned and completely damned. Then the one and only renewal of this present creation will take place and the new heaven and earth will become a reality (21:1-2). Then God's people of both the Old and New Testament periods will receive their final inheritance, the kingdom in its final phase (21:1 – 22:5; cf. 11:15; Matthew 25:34). God will dwell with his people on the new earth (21:3) and reveal himself in absolute glory (22:3-5). Then the eternal state will begin!

Thus, when the seventh trumpet will be sounded, loud voices in heaven will say that the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of the Lord and his Christ (11:15) This is not a description of a so-called future millennial kingdom, but of God's kingdom in its final and eternal state as the new heaven and the new earth (Matthew 25:34; 1 Corinthians 15:24)!

But *the description* of this eternal state is not yet given at this point, because more things must first happen.

The events of the seven thunders, which have not been revealed, must first take place. Therefore John must first prophesy about other events before the eternal state will have arrived.

#### **(2) Different views about the mystery of God (10:7).**

A futurist view. The mystery of God is the reason why God permitted Satan to cause the fall of man and thus bring sin and misery and death into the world. It is the reason why sin was permitted to wreck this world. It includes the message that Christ would dispossess the false claimant, Satan, and formally take possession of the earth when he sets up his future millennial kingdom (Larkin)<sup>7</sup>.

The correct explanation. The mystery of God refers to *God's eternal plan concerning salvation for believers and judgement for unbelievers, the eternal decree (plan) that determines all world history.*<sup>8</sup> It is especially made known through the preaching of the gospel (of grace and kingship) of Christ. Christians proclaim Christ crucified and resurrected (1 Cor 1:18-25; 1 Cor 15:1-4), Christ the Great Divider of people who saves believers and judges unbelievers (Lk 2:34; Jn 3:16-18; Mt 12:30) and Christ the King of all kings (1:5; 17:14; 19:16).

A second correct explanation. The mystery of God refers to *God's eternal plan concerning salvation for believers and judgement for unbelievers, the eternal decree (plan) that determines all world history.* It is especially made known through the preaching of the gospel (of grace and kingship) of Christ. Christians proclaim Christ crucified and resurrected (1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 15:1-4), Christ the Great Divider of people who saves believers and judges unbelievers (Luke 2:34; John 3:16-18; Matthew 12:30) and Christ the King of all kings (1:5; 17:14; 19:16).

#### PART 6. Revelation 10:8-11. EATING THE SCROLL.

##### **(1) Explanation of the symbols.**

**10:8** And (then) the voice (*Greek: phone*) that I had heard (*aorist*) from heaven spoke (*Greek: laleo*)(*present*) to me once more (*Greek: palin*) and said (*present*): 'Go (*Greek: hupago*)(*imperative, present*), take (*Greek: lambano*)(*imperative, aorist*) the scroll (*Greek: to biblion*) that lies open (*Greek: anoigo*)(*perfect*) in the hand of the angel who is standing (*Greek: histemi*)(*perfect*) on the sea and on the land.'

<sup>7</sup> Larkin, Revelation pp. 81-82

<sup>8</sup> Hendriksen p. 150

**10:9** And (so) I went (*Greek: aperchomai, eleusomai, elthon, elelutha*)(*ao*rist) to the angel and asked (said)(*Greek: lego*)(*present*) him to give (*Greek: didomi*)(*ao*rist) me the little scroll (*Greek: biblaridion*). And he said (*present*) to me, 'Take it (*Greek: lambano*)(*imperative, aorist*). The little scroll is not given to John, but *he must go and must take it* out of the hand of the angel. The messenger of the Lord (the prophet, the apostle, the preacher, the evangelist, the Christian) is not simply a passive instrument in the hands of God, but must exert himself to know what he must proclaim in the name of the Lord. He must ask in order to receive (Matthew 7:7-8). He must study and cause the word of Christ to dwell richly in him so that he will be able to teach others (Colossians 3:16).

**10:9b** and eat (*Greek: katesthio, katephagon*)(*imperative, aorist*) it and it will turn bitter (*Greek: pikraino*)(*future*) your stomach (*Greek: koilian*), but in your mouth (*Greek: stoma*) it will be (*future*) as sweet (*Greek: glukus*) as honey (*Greek: meli*).

**10:10** and I took (*ao*rist) the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate (*Greek: katesthio*)(*ao*rist) it and it was (became, tasted)(*imperfect*) as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten (*ao*rist) it, my stomach turned bitter (*Greek: pikraino*)(*ao*rist). The angel commanded John to come and take the little scroll and then to eat it. In itself the gospel is sweet for everyone who accepts it, but its proclamation is always followed by bitter persecution of Christians (cf. Psalm 119:103; Jeremiah 15:16-18; Ezekiel 2:9 to 3:11). The first rider on the white horse is always followed by the riders on the red and black horses. Christ proclaiming the gospel is ever followed by slaughter and oppression (6:2-6). What God gives and works are in themselves good and glorious things. However, they have a sad outworking due to the degeneration of the people and the world with which they come into contact. "The gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16), but at the same time "the smell of death for everyone who does not believe" (2 Corinthians 2:16). The content of the gospel, Jesus Christ, is destined to cause the falling and rising of many people, first in Israel and then in the whole world (Luke 2:34; cf. Isaiah 8:13-15).

The little scroll containing God's message about God's eternal plan concerning salvation to the penitent and concerning judgement to the impenitent will be as sweet as honey in the mouth of the preacher, but turn his stomach bitter due to the opposition against Christ and Christians in the world. The apostle John must not merely *understand* (with his mind) and digest the message of the gospel: he must also *experience* (in his life) its sweetness of salvation and bitterness of suffering (Luke 9:23). Suffering is unavoidable. "Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Timothy 3:12; cf. Matthew 10:17-20).

This bitter result is not caused by the gospel, but by the people of the world who reject it and oppose those who accept it or proclaim it. Right at that time, John was exiled on Patmos (1:9) and he was writing to Christians in severe tribulation (2:9-10,13). Revelation 11:1-14 actually gives a description of the bitter experiences that the true witnesses of Christ must endure when they proclaim the sweet gospel of salvation.

**10:11** And they said (*Greek: lego*)(*present, plural*) to me, 'You must (*Greek: dei*)(*present*) again (*Greek: palin*) prophesy (*Greek: propheteuo*)(*ao*rist) about peoples (*Greek: laos*), nations (*Greek: ethne*), languages (*Greek: glossa*) and many (*Greek: polus*) kings (*Greek: basileus*'. This was probably said by angels. It revealed the meaning of "eating the little scroll". John was told that he must again prophesy or proclaim about other matters and events, which concerned peoples, nations, languages and kings. It is a divine "must", a commandment from God that may not and cannot be avoided. It has been determined that the gospel must be proclaimed to every tribe, language, people and nation (5:9; Matthew 24:14; Acts 20:24).

The Old Testament prophets already prophesied to the many nations (probably through their envoys visiting Israel) (Isaiah chapter 13 to 23, Jeremiah chapter 46 to 51 and Ezekiel chapter 25 to 32). They proclaimed the following:

No "god" was ever formed, or has come into existence in the past or will come into existence in the future. Apart from the God who revealed himself in the Bible there is no other "god" or other "saviour".

Only the God of the Bible revealed himself and his eternal plan of salvation and judgement.

Only the God of the Bible saves people from sin, death, judgement, Satan and his demons.

No one can deliver out of the hand of the God of the Bible.

No one can reverse God's acts in history.

And God's people should be his witnesses of these matters to the nations (Isaiah 43:10-13).

Now the New Testament prophet, John, who is an apostle with a prophetic gift among his other gifts, is commanded to prophesy "again" about peoples, nations, languages and kings (through the book of Revelation). Many nations have heard God's message before and must hear it again!

Therefore, disturbance enters people groups, nations, languages and kings "in great numbers". The last word in verse 11 is "many" or "in great numbers" and is thus emphasised. The Church through its ministers and missionaries must also address the kings of the nations (Matthew 10:18-20) and these kings rule over kingdoms, people groups and languages. The Old Testament prophets did that (Jeremiah 25:17-26) and the New Testament apostles did that (Acts 5:27-32; Acts 9:15-16). And the apostle John did that. Revelation chapter 13, 17 and 18 prophesy about the kings and the leaders of politics, religions and commerce in the world.

When Christians *proclaim* the message of the gospel and the kingship of Christ (as revealed in the Gospels and in the book of Revelation), they *prophesy!* The first meaning of the word "prophesy" is to *proclaim!*

**(2) Different views about the little scroll** (10:9-11).

A futurist view. The little scroll is remarkably a *symbolic* action, because the futurist usually regards most things to be taken *literal!* It refers to John (not literally 'eating', but) *meditating* on the revelation of the future sufferings of the Jews *during the second half of the future tribulation period* and the future blessing for Jews when *the future (Jewish) millennial kingdom* is set up (Larkin)<sup>9</sup>.

The correct explanation. The eating of the little scroll is a symbolic action and refers to John understanding and proclaiming the gospel about salvation and judgement to the nations of his lifetime and experiencing the cross of Jesus. The apostle John must not merely *understand* and digest the message of the gospel: he must also *proclaim* it (prophesy) and *experience* its sweetness of salvation and its bitterness of suffering (Luke 9:23).

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<sup>9</sup> Larkin, Revelation pp. 81-82