

Revelation 10a – Disappointment in the Sanctuary

THE SEVEN THUNDERS (REVELATION 10) PART I

May people have laughed at the Adventist Movement and even concluded that a movement ordered by God cannot start in disappointment. But this is not the first time a movement has started with a disappointment. John the Baptist after declaring in John 1:29 “behold the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world” was later disappointed Matthew 11:1-3. The disciples were disappointed too Luke 24:18-24 and so disappointment in the sanctuary of the Lord is not a new thing but the Lord will never lead us to a wrong path that has been proved in the previous walks.

WHAT IS THE TIMEFRAME FOR THE CHAPTER?

Rev 10 is part of the sixth trumpet (see Rev 9:13; 11:15). To know the timeframe for chap. 10 we must first ask what the timeframe is for the fifth trumpet and the seventh, i.e., the ones on either side of this one. The fifth trumpet is the FIRST WOE. It follows four other trumpets that are not woes. This requires time. So on what basis are we back at our chronological starting point when we come to the sixth in the series? We might be able to say with exact certainty when the sixth trumpet takes place, but we can be very sure when it does not take place. It DOES NOT take place in the first century – unless all the trumpets do, and in that event we have a preterits interpretation in which nothing at all goes beyond the prophet's lifetime. Historicism expositors have generally located the fifth trumpet in the middle ages. The seventh trumpet brings us to the very final events of Earth's history (see Rev 11:17-19). So it would be reasonable to suggest that chronologically the sixth trumpet falls between these two points, i.e., somewhere between the middle ages and the end of Earth's history; the time when we are living now. But the angel addresses John in chap. 10, just as Daniel addresses Nebuchadnezzar in Dan 2. Surely this must be a literal reference to John himself during the prophet's own lifetime. There are three arguments against saying so. The first has already been introduced above, i.e., that the sixth trumpet should be located in time somewhere between the fifth and the seventh. The second argument is that what happened between Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar does not provide a binding precedent for Rev 10. In Dan 2 there is much that is literal, and also a symbolic dream and its interpretation, but in the trumpets nothing is literal. This brings us to the third argument. Making Rev 10 into a literal conversation between John and an angel in John's lifetime would take any such conversation beyond the context of everything surrounding it. Rev10 occurs in a sea of symbolism provided by the entire series of seven trumpets generally and by the rest of number six in particular.

Verses 1-7 Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars. He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion. When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke. And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down." Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created 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, and said, "There will be no more delay! But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as

he announced to his servants the prophets." (Rev 10:1-7) The mystery of what the "seven thunders" say becomes clearer when we feed in two pieces of information. First, what they say is something that God WITHHOLDS from the church. That's why John could not write it down (vs. 4). "The information is withheld. Second, it is withheld in the timeframe of a DISAPPOINTMENT of some sort (see vss. 8-11). If this is just John and there is no further significance, the whole exchange is rendered vacuous" (Erick Omondi).

Once we place the exchange in our own day as involving, not a single individual but a broad cross-section of the church, we can know – within reasonable parameters – what the seven thunders said. They say what the church was not allowed to know in the years leading up to the great disappointment of 1844. That's why there was a disappointment. There were things the Millerites didn't know or understand. If they had, their message would not have been what it was, nor could it have had the power it did. It is true that we don't know how the seven thunders laid all this out, but can be very sure that this was their subject matter. Armed with this much information, we can look back over the events with hindsight and see how God led His remnant people in the years before and after 1844. The Millerites didn't have any idea how God would lead them. He withheld that knowledge from them. That's what vss. 2-4 are trying to tell us.

THE SEVEN THUNDERS (REVELATION 10) PART II

Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me once more: "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take it and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey." I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour. Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings." (Rev 10:8-11) What made the scroll sweet in John's mouth? We learn this by asking what made it sour in his stomach later. Verse 11 says, "Then I was told, 'You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings.'" This statement summarizes for us why John's stomach became sour. If the knowledge that there would be more work to do made the scroll sour, what made it sweet was the opposite, i.e., the belief that – because Jesus' second coming was imminent – the advent believers would not have more work to do. It was all done. The days of their prophesying (or speaking for God) were over, because they were going to come to heaven on October 22, 1844. When they found out otherwise, the intensity of their joy at the thought of seeing Jesus and being with Him was changed to a corresponding level of disappointment at having to stay here. The great disappointment was the opposite counterpart of the anticipation these people felt at the thought of Jesus coming to take them home. SAME MESSAGE Rev 10:1-7 and 8-11 say essentially the same things. Both describe events in and around the time of the great disappointment of 1844. The seven thunders – if written down – could have spared the Millerites and early Adventists their great disappointment, but doing so would have robbed the message of its power. So God concealed certain things, allowed the Millerite message to go to the world in all its potential force, and allowed the disappointment to occur with all its devastating bitterness. He allowed events to show who really loved Him. Would not such information be valuable to have in the context of what the Millerites thought would be the second coming? The scroll John ate was sweet in the mouth precisely because what the seven thunders said was not

written down. This is another reason why a literal exchange doesn't provide a good set of starting assumptions. The whole story line revolves around the fact that something was disappointing. Something changed John's experience with the booklet from sweet to sour. This works if John is personifying Millerites, but not if he's writing on his own account, because they didn't hear what the thunders said. But he did. He was not forbidden to hear them. He heard them. He knew what they said. He merely couldn't write it down. So how could not knowing what they said be a factor in turning the booklet sour in his stomach? Whoever is being described did not have the information John had. From this we can conclude that it wasn't John. The message of the scroll became sour for the Millerites when they found out by hard experience what the thunders had been talking about all along. They learned on October 23 what they had been kept from learning earlier. This is what brought their disappointment. DIFFERENT MESSAGE?

There is one significant difference between the messages of the two sections, and this difference is very significant indeed. In vs. 6 the angel "swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created 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, and said, 'There will be no more delay [chronos ouketi estai]!" The Greek says, "There will be no more time" (lit., "time no more there is [i.e., there will be]"). So vs. 6 appears to say there will not be more time and vs. 11 appears to say there will be. Do the sections disagree?

NO CONFLICT

At issue is what we mean by time. What sort of time does vs. 6 have in view? Answer: NOT chronological time. If in vs. 6 the angel were speaking of chronological time, the Millerites would have been right and what the angel says a bit later in vs. 11 ("you must prophesy again") would be wrong. Under such circumstances the scroll would never have become sour in John's stomach. Verse 6 is not referring to chronological time. If not chronological time, what then? Prophetic time. The events described in Rev 10 were occurring in and around 1844. That's when the 2300 days ended – in the timeframe of the second or great disappointment. The 1290 and 1335 days prophetic periods had ended just one year previously (1843) – in the timeframe of the first disappointment. The 1260 days ended only 45 years before that in 1798. The seventy weeks were over long since – in the timeframe of the first coming. After 1844 there would be more chronological time. We still don't know how much, but the point is that history did not end then. What ended in 1844 was prophetic time. The great prophetic time periods had all come to an end by October 22, 1844. After that, it was no longer a matter of time. God would test His people in other ways.

VERSE BY VERSE***Revelation Chapter 10*****An Interruption in the Prophecy****Time No Longer**

The ninth chapter closed with the events that came under the sixth seal. The seventh trumpet has not sounded as yet and is not introduced until the 15th verse of chapter 11. Thus we have a parenthetical prophecy that is inserted here between the sixth and seventh trumpet. John has other events that need to be introduced before the opening of the seventh trumpet and he takes this occasion to do so. This should not be something new to us as we have seen the same take place between the sixth and seventh seals with chapter 7.

Revelation 10:1 “*And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:*”

I saw - Chapters 10:1 to 11:14 constitute a parenthesis between the sixth and seventh trumpets. This parenthesis is similar to that of chapter 7, which comes between the sixth and seventh seals.

Another - This automatically sets this angel apart from the others that have the seven trumpets.

Angel come down from heaven - Although the focus of the vision is now upon a heavenly being, its locale is still the earth. The significance of the angel/messenger coming down from heaven is that it shows this is a message that has its origin from God. Thus this message is of great importance.

It is also interesting to note that when Satan moves it is not symbolized as coming from above but beneath, the abyss, the sea and the earth.

Clothed with a cloud - Greek *periballō*, “to throw about,” “to envelop,” “to clothe.” We find that this mighty angel is clothed with a cloud. When looking through scripture we find that clouds are associated with Deity. Note the following:

“*And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way...*” Exodus 13:21

“*And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud...*” Exodus 19:9

“...*one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.*” Daniel 7:13

Christ's transfiguration on the mountain

“While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” Matthew 17:5

Christ's ascension and second coming

“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.” Acts 1:9

“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they [also] which pierced him...” Revelation 1:7

In seeing that clouds are associated with Deity, we can thus conclude that this angel must be a member of the Godhead. See also Revelation 14:14; cf. Psalms 104:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

Rainbow was upon his head - We you look at this symbol in Revelation 4:3 (compare Ezekiel 1:26-28) you find that God is a covenant keeping God and that He is just and merciful; a fitting symbol to be about this angel's head. The angel's face, “as it were the sun,” shining through the cloud with which he is enveloped may be thought of as the occasion for the rainbow. Compare on Genesis 9:14-16.

As it were the sun - This reminds us of the description of Christ in the first chapter. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness. (Malachi 4:2) Compare also the description of Christ in Revelation 1:16.

Feet - To compare feet to pillars appears incongruous, but the word “feet” (*podes*) is doubtless used here in the sense of the lower extremities, the legs and feet, which are likened to pillars of fire. (cf. of S. Sol. 5:15; cf. on Ezekiel 1:7). Romans 10:15-18

Pillars of fire - Compare the description of the feet of Christ in Revelation 1:15. Neh 9:12, Col 1:12, 13, 2 Tim 1:9-12

So we find that Jesus is this angel that brings a Divine message, the One that is the covenant keeping God.

Revelation 10:2 “*And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,*”

2. In his hand - Compare the symbolism of Ezekiel 2:9.

A little book - Greek *biblaridion*, “a little scroll.” In the New Testament *biblaridion* appears only in the present chapter. As contrasted with the scroll (*biblion*) in the hand of God in Revelation 5:1, this little scroll is distinctly smaller. Compare the symbolism of Ezekiel 2:9. So what is this little book? To make special mention that the book is open implies that at some stage the book was closed or sealed. Where do we find a book like this?

There are a number of reasons to prove that this book is none other than the book of Daniel. They are as follows;

- The book is mentioned as being little. Daniel is only comprised of 12 chapters.
- Each time the book is mentioned it is said that it is “open”. This indicates that it was closed or sealed at some prior stage. The book of Daniel was to be sealed until the time of the end. (Daniel 12:4, 9) This is the only book spoken of as being sealed.
- With the book of Daniel being mentioned as sealed until the time of the end, it would be reasonable to expect that at the time of the events surrounding the time of the end, the opening of this book would be mentioned.
- There is no account of the book of Daniel being opened unless this verse in Revelation is accepted. Thus the book of Daniel would be a forever closed book.
- The little book in chapter 10 is concerned with time, “time no longer.” The only other book of the Bible that specializes in time is the book of Daniel.
- Daniel did not understand the oath in Daniel 12:8, but was reassured in verse 9 that the understanding would be given after the time of the end. chapter 10 is a fulfilment of this promise.
- The person that made the oath in Daniel 12:7 is described in Daniel 10:5-6, but is also the same person that makes the oath in chapter 10. This person is Jesus Christ according to the description given in Revelation 1:13-17. This shows the closeness of Daniel 12 and Revelation 10.
- With the book being open and the message being proclaimed from it, shows that the message is proclaimed this side of the time of the end in 1798.

Daniel 11:35 gives a brief explanation of the papal persecution during its reign in the dark ages. According to this verse the persecution was to cease at the time of the end, which was the end of the 1260 years of papal supremacy. This ended in 1798 and thus we see that the time of the end began 1798. So from 1798 onwards the book of Daniel has been open.

Open - The Greek implies that the book has been opened and still is open. By contrast, the previous scroll was sealed with seven seals. (Revelation 5:1) Daniel had been instructed to “shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.” (Revelation 12:4) This admonition applies particularly to the part of Daniel's prophecies that deals with the last days, and doubtless especially to the time element of the 2300 days (Revelation 8:14) as it relates to the preaching of the first, second, and third angels' messages. (Revelation 14:6-12) Inasmuch as the message of the present angel deals with time, and presumably with events at the time of the end, when the book of Daniel was to be unsealed (Daniel 12:4), it seems reasonable to conclude that the little book open in the hand of the angel was the book of Daniel. With the presentation to John of the little book open, the sealed portions of Daniel's prophecy are revealed. The time element, pointing out the end of the 2300-day prophecy is made clear. Consequently the present chapter focuses upon the time when the proclamation of verses 6-7 was made, that is, during the years 1840 to 1844.

Foot upon the sea...foot upon the earth - Sea and earth are used repeatedly to designate the world as a whole. (see Exodus 20:4, 11; Psalms 69:34) The fact that the angel stands upon both sea and earth implies the worldwide proclamation of his message and also his power and authority over the world. This shows the extent of

the message that was to be proclaimed from the book of Daniel. The message would cross the seas to distant lands; the islands of the seas would also hear the proclamation of this message. This message is worldwide in its nature.

Revelation 10:3-4 “*And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. 4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.*”

3. Cried with a loud voice - This cry was likened unto a lion that roareth. A lion's roar is powerful and very loud, but can also be heard for quite a distance.

When a lion roareth - Only the deep, resounding note of the angel's voice is emphasized. What he said is not recorded.

Seven thunders - Another in the various series of sevens that characterize the Revelation.

4. Seven thunders uttered their voices - The seven thunders utter their voices when the cry goes out. Do we know what they are? (Synonymous of John 12:28-30).

I was about to write - It is obvious that John understood those things that were uttered for he was about to write them down. But before he could, a voice from heaven told him to seal up the things that the thunders uttered and do not write them. God in His wisdom has withheld them from our understanding; it has not been revealed to us what they are. The present passage indicates that John recorded the visions of the Revelation as they were shown him and not at a later date.

Seal up - Like Daniel, long before, John is now hidden to “seal up” the revelation that had come to him. (see Daniel 12:4) Paul also, in vision, had heard “unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” (2 Corinthians 12:4) The messages of the seven thunders obviously were not a revelation for the people of John's day. They doubtless revealed details of the messages that were to be proclaimed at “the time of the end.” (Daniel 12:4; cf. on Revelation 10:2) Thus they may be understood as a portrayal of events that would occur in connection with the proclamation of the first and second angel's messages.

Revelation 10:5-6 “*And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, 6 And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.*”

5. Lifted up his hand to heaven - As it is in our day so it was in ancient times, that the lifting up of the hand was a gesture characteristic of the utterance of an oath. (Genesis 14:21-23; Deuteronomy 32:40; Ezekiel 20:15; Daniel 12:7)

6. Swear by him that liveth forever and ever - Here the angel, who is Christ swears by the one that lives for ever and ever, but also by the one that created all things. The one that made all things is Christ, (John 1:1-3, 14) and thus also keepeth

truth for ever. (Psalms 146:6) Christ swears by Himself for there is no greater than He can swear by. (Hebrews 6:13) This shows the importance of the truth in this chapter.

Who created - Compare Exodus 20:11; Psalms 146:6. No more solemn oath could be made. (see Hebrews 6:13) In swearing by the Creator, the angel, who is Christ, (Revelation 10:1) swears by himself.

Time no longer - Greek *chronos ouketi estai*, “time no more shall be.” What is this time no longer? Is it literal time, that is, time as calculated by the world today, should end and eternity start; or is it referring to probationary time of when the day will come when salvation's door closes forevermore? Is it symbolic time of where a day represents a year? This cryptic declaration has been variously interpreted. Many expositors have understood it to mark the end of time as such, and the beginning of eternity. Others have taken the word “time” in the sense of the time that elapses before the final events of history, and so have translated, “there shall be no more delay.”

We find that the answer is none of the above mentioned. The reasons for this are as follows;

Literal time It cannot be literal time, as in the end of the world, for at the close of the proclamation of this message, the command is given that “thou must prophesy again,” verse 11. Thus it cannot be the end of the world.

Probationary time In verse 7 we find that, during the sounding of the seventh angel the mystery of God should be finished. The mystery of God represents the gospel and its work in a person's life, and the finishing of this is the close of probationary time. If probationary time is here referred to, why do we need to have the gospel do its work under the seventh angel when all cases have been decided for gain or loss of eternal life?

Symbolic time Symbolic time, a day for a year, extends until the second coming of Christ, at which stage time changes from symbolic to literal time. This is a very important Biblical principle to remember. It is because of this principle that we understand the 1000 years of chapter 20 to be literal and not symbolic. The events of chapter 20 occur after the second coming of Christ. The events of chapter 20 are literal events, a literal resurrection of the wicked, a literal beloved city, literal fire and literal death, thus a literal thousand years.

So we can see that it is not symbolic time referred to, as we are still dealing with the time frame before the second coming of Christ.

To understand the issue of “time no longer” we need to go to the book of Daniel, for it is this book that is open in the hand of the angel and which is being proclaimed from. Here we shall find the answer.

In the book of Daniel there are four prophetic time periods, also known as chronological time periods, each of them with a definite starting and finishing date. They are as follows;

- The 3½ prophetic years of Daniel 7:25 and 12:7. The rise and fall of Papal supremacy. 538 A.D. - 1798 A.D.
- The 1290 prophetic days of Daniel 12:11. The taking away of the daily and the abomination set up. 508 A.D. - 1798 A.D.
- The 1335 prophetic days of Daniel 12:12. Daniel and the saints stand in their lot for judgment. 508 A.D. - 1843/44 A.D.
- The 2300 prophetic days of Daniel 8:14. At the close of this date the cleansing of the sanctuary or judgment would commence. 457 B.C. - 1844 A.D.

The longest time prophecy in the book of Daniel is the 2300 days which ended in 1844. This marked the end of all the chronological prophecies and thus the ending of all definite date settings. It is to this that the angel was pointing when exclaiming that there should be “time no longer.” No longer are we to look to these prophecies to be fulfilled, they have come to their end. All chronological time prophecies/time periods have ceased. No more dates are to be set after 1844, for any event whatsoever, as far as Bible prophecy is concerned. 1844 is the last date in Bible prophecy.

This does not mean that the day for a year principle ceased in 1844, it means that, all time periods needing an ending date have ceased.

The only group I have found so far that have understood this correctly are the Seventh-day Adventists. They have generally understood these words to describe particularly the message proclaimed in the years 1840-1844 by William Miller who was a Baptist preacher, and others in connection with the close of the 2300-day prophecy. They have understood the “time” to be prophetic time, and its end to signify the close of the longest time prophecy, that of the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14.

Revelation 10:7 “*But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he has declared to his servants the prophets.*”

7. Days of the voice of the seventh angel - Some commentators have taken “days” here as prophetic year-days. Whether these are to be understood as days or years seems to make little difference for the expression itself is general, and coming after the declaration of verse 6, so they cannot specify a measurable time period. The sense of the passage is that at the time of the seventh trumpet the mystery of God is to be completed. In God's plan this event was to follow upon the proclamation that “there should be time no longer.” (verse 6) Compare the declaration under the seventh plague, “It is done.” (Revelation 16:17) The seventh angel is no doubt a reference to the angel of the seventh trumpet.

When he shall begin to sound - Or, “when he shall sound.” The seventh trumpet marks a climactic point in the great controversy between Christ and Satan, as revealed by the proclamation of the voices in heaven at that time. (Revelation 11:15)

The mystery of God - This refers to the time period during which the seventh angel sounds and the final seven bowl judgments pour forth (Rev. Rev. 11:15. During the sounding of the seventh trumpet the mystery of God will be finished; Revelation 1:20;

cf. on Romans 11:25. Jesus used a similar phrase, “the mystery of the kingdom of God,” (Mark 4:11) and Paul also speaks of “the mystery of God” (Colossians 2:2) and “the mystery of Christ.” (Colossians 4:3) What is the mystery of God here?

- *“How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ).” Ephesians 3:3-4. By revelation this mystery of Christ was made known unto him.*
- *“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught [it], but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen.” Galatians 1:11-12, 16.*
- *“To whom God would make known what [is] the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27.*

A mystery is something which is unknowable by man unless revealed by God:

The New Testament mystery doctrines (see T. Ernest Wilson, Mystery Doctrines of the New Testament , pp. 10-12) make an interesting study, and may be listed as follows (1) the faith, 1Ti. 1Ti. 3:9. (2) the church, Rom. Rom. 16:25. (3) the gospel, Eph. Eph. 6:19. (4) Jew and Gentile in one body, Eph. Eph. 3:1. (5) the bride, Eph. Eph. 5:32. Rev. Rev. 19:1, Rev. 20:1. (6) seven stars and seven churches, Rev. Rev. 1:20. (7) of godliness, 1Ti. 1Ti. 3:16. (8) kingdom of heaven, Mtt. Mat. 13:11. (9) Israel’s blindness, Rom. Rom. 11:25. (10) rapture of the church, 1Cor. 1Cor. 15:51. (11) His will, Eph. Eph. 1:9. (12) of God, Rev. Rev. 10:7+. (13) the indwelling Christ, Col. Col. 1:24-29. (14) the Godhead of Christ, Col. Col. 2:2, Col. 2:9. (15) of iniquity, 2Th. 2Th. 2:7. (16) Babylon, Rev. Rev. 17:5. Isa. Isa. 2:1-4.

NT mysteries reveal information which was not previously made known: “The mystery [of Rev. Rev. 10:7 is that there will be a series of seven climactic judgments that will destroy the satanic mystery of the man of sin. This was not revealed in the Old Testament.”

The expression, “the mystery of God,” in this connection seems to indicate all those counsels and dealings of God made known by Him to and through the prophets, concerning His governmental proceedings with men on earth looking always toward the establishment of the kingdom in the hands of Christ. When Christ comes to take the kingdom, there will be no mystery, but, on the contrary, manifestation. “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea”—that is, universally and compulsorily (Isaiah Isa. 11:9).

This is why it is also known as the mystery of the gospel, for this is the purpose of the gospel. The mystery of God that He reveals to His children is His purpose for them, the plan of redemption. Compare 1 Timothy 3:16.

That is, the angel not only swears that time shall be no longer, but that also then shall be finished the mystery of God; by which is meant, not the resurrection of the

dead, and the change of the living, which is called a mystery, (1 Corinthians 15:51) ; for though when this angel sounds, and has done sounding, and Christ comes, the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the dead in Christ, will be finished, yet not the whole resurrection; for the rest of the dead will not live again till the end of the thousand years: but rather the Gospel is designed, which is often called the mystery, and the mystery of the Gospel, and contains many mysteries in it, which are styled the mysteries of God; which respect him, his being, persons, operations, and grace; and are revealed and made known by him; and the finishing of this may respect the preaching of the Gospel to all nations, which will be before the end of the world, and whereby the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and multitudes of souls converted; wherefore it may be best of all to understand this of the church of God, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, even all the elect of God, whose number will now be finished and completed in the conversion of the Jews, and in the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, both which are called "mysteries", (Romans 11:25 Romans 11:26) (Ephesians 3:4-6) ; and now as the antichristian church is called "mystery", "Babylon", (Revelation 17:5) ; and "the mystery of iniquity", (2 Thessalonians 2:7) ; so the true Christian church, the new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, may bear the name of the mystery of God; and this may also take in the mystery of all God's providences and promises, and prophecies, respecting the state of his church and people on earth:

As he hath declared to his servants and prophets;

as to Isaiah in (Isaiah 60:3-5) and (Isaiah 66:8) ; and to Daniel, in (Daniel 2:44) (Daniel 7:25) (Daniel 12:6 Daniel 12:7) ; and to Zechariah, in (Zechariah 14:9) , and others; and which was a Gospel declaration, as the word signifies; it was good news and glad tidings; glorious things were declared to them, and spoken by them, concerning the city and church of God, its happy state on earth, and Christ's reign in it.

Should be finished - Revelation 11:15.

ἔτελέσθη [etelesthē] , prophetic aorist, which emphasizes the certainty of the future event as if it had already occurred. The completion comes in the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which initiates the seven bowls of God's wrath. When the final (seventh) bowl is poured forth, “a loud voice came out of the temple in heaven, from the throne, saying, ‘It is done!’ ” (Rev. Rev. 16:17).

All the pain, sorrow, suffering, and evil in the world cause the godly to long for God to intervene. A day is coming when He will break His silence, a day when all the purposes of God concerning men and the world will be consummated. . . . All the atheists, agnostics, and scoffers who mocked the thought that Christ would return (2Pe. 2Pe. 3:3-4) will be silenced. The millennia of sin, lies, murders, thefts, wars, and the persecution and martyrdom of God's people will be over. Satan and his demon hosts will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years (Rev. Rev. 20:1-3), unable any longer to tempt, torment, or accuse believers. The desert will become a blossoming garden (cf. Isa. Isa. 35:1; Isa. 51:3; Eze. Eze. 36:34-35), people will live long lives (Isa. Isa. 65:20), and there will be peace between former enemies at all levels of society—and even in the animal kingdom (Isa. Isa. 11:6-8). The declaration

and exposition of the mystery of God has ever been the burden of His servants the prophets in their messages to men. (Romans 3:21)

Declared is εὐηγγέλισεν [euēngelisen], he announced good news. The message declared to the prophets was ultimately one of good news: the gospel! Not only of Christ's provision for man's sin, but of God's ultimate reclamation of fallen creation. The complete gospel includes much more than individual redemption, but extends to the entire redemptive revelation of God:

We, therefore, plant ourselves upon the divinest of records, and upon the most authentic, direct, and solemn of all sacred utterances, and say, that he whose gospel drops and repudiates from its central themes the grand doctrine of the consummation of all things, as portrayed in this Apocalypse, is not the true Gospel of God.

The book of Revelation is not a "head without a body." It is intimately connected with a large amount of prophetic material set forth elsewhere in Scripture. This fact alone undermines the attempt by preterist interpreters to limit the scope of the book. For to limit the scope of Revelation to the events surrounding the judgment of Jerusalem by Rome in A.D. 70 necessitates the cutting short of all the grand prophetic themes of Scripture. Indeed, some preterists implicitly recognize this fact when they assert that we are already in the new heavens and new earth. No, we must leave the preterists to follow their own dead-end path which lops off huge parts of God's prophetic program and understand the book of Revelation within the grand scheme of God's entire redemptive plan for all nations, nay, for the entire globe, nay, for all of creation! The phrase the prophets is best understood as denoting the Old Testament prophets because "the relative silence of NT prophecy in regard to the fulfillment of Israel's hope and kingdom is notable."

The mystery previously hidden refers to all the unknown details that are revealed from this point to the end of Revelation, when the new heavens and new earth are created. God had preached that mystery (without all the details revealed in the New Testament) to His servants the prophets in the Old Testament, and men like Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Amos, and Zechariah wrote of end-time events. Much of the detail, however, was hidden and not revealed until the New Testament (for example in Mtt. Mat. 24:1, Mat. 25:1, and 2Th. 2Th. 1:5-2Th. 2:12), and more particularly in the previous chapters of Revelation.

The mystery was declared by God to His servants (Dan. Dan. 9:6; Amos Amos 3:7; Zec. Zec. 1:6). The prophets were not free to speculate concerning God's plan for history using their own uninspired words. They were His servants and He saw to it that they obeyed to record precisely that which He desired to have recorded in Holy Scripture! For how could He call them servant (even "slaves," δούλους [doulos]) if they did not serve His will? And what could be said of a God who was unable to control His servants—those set aside for His specific use? Those commentators who would deny the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, of which there is no shortage, must stumble on this point. Here, John tells us that what will be fulfilled is what God declared to His servants: that which they recorded and was preserved for our learning. If the Lord spoke through His servants the prophets, only to have what He said be hopelessly twisted and distorted so that it was no longer inerrant in all matters which it records, then how could He hold men to it? Would it be fair to

condemn men for eternity in flames if the very message which sets forth their doom and the offer of eternal life is itself hopelessly flawed? For even if the main message were somehow preserved (the view of partial inspiration), what man could be condemned for failing to trust in it if it could be shown that numerous passages were in error? And who is responsible for deciding what portions are the true message of God reliably preserved and which portions are not His, but flawed distortions of His original message? Clearly, views which fail to acknowledge the reliability of God's Word make Scripture akin to Swiss cheese—full of holes. See Anti-supernatural Bias. Since the mystery which will be finished was declared to His servants the prophets, we might expect that the mystery involves the consummation of a wide range of prophetic themes which run like threads throughout both testaments. Jerome Smith provides a cogent summary of what may be involved in this “ultimate mystery.”

This “mystery” which is to be finished involves

1. *The resolution of the problem of evil, which was first manifest in the Garden of Eden, as the first sin seemingly interrupted the purpose for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The fall brought the attendant curse upon man and all creation, the curse now announced to be removed. The prophets speak unitedly of the coming Messianic Kingdom as a time of regeneration, restitution, and restoration, when earth will be restored to its paradisiacal state, a time when the curse is removed (Rev. 22:3; Gen. 3:15; Isa. 11:6-9; Isa. 60:21; Zec. 14:11; Acts 3:19-21).*
2. *The resolution of the apparent paradox of election and free will, and a clarification to us of the orderings of providence (1Cor. 13:12; Eph. 1:11).*
3. *The consummation of the mystery of godliness, involving the human and divine cooperating in establishing the Davidic theocratic kingdom (Isa. 54:1; Mat. 22:41-46; John 1:51; 1Cor. 15:50; Eph. 1:10; 1Ti. 3:16).*
4. *The completion of our redemption and the establishment of our inheritance (Mtt. 19:27-30; Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:11; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 9:28; 1Jn. 3:2).*
5. *The pre-tribulational, premillennial personal appearance of Christ for believers to prepare the organization of, and to set up, his kingdom before its open, public manifestation (Deu. 33:2; Isa. 11:11; 1Cor. 15:51-52; 1Th. 4:16-18; Tit. 2:13; Rev. 11:17-18).*
6. *The accomplishment of divine vengeance and retribution in the Day of the Lord (Is. 61:2; Isa. 63:4; Rev. 1:10).*
7. *The open revelation of Christ, the overthrow of Antichrist, the investiture of the kingdom, the exaltation of the saints, the overthrow of Satan (Dan. 7:13-14; Luke 10:18; Col. 3:4; 2Th. 1:10; 2Th. 2:8 Rev. 20:10).*

Because this finishing occurs at the beginning of the seventh trumpet (which itself is clearly premillennial), the finishing is necessarily premillennial, not postmillennial. The theme of all the prophets is the fulfillment of the covenants and promises in the “sure mercies of David” in establishing the Messianic Kingdom, which is the kingdom of God upon earth, as our eternal inheritance (Isa. 55:3; Mtt; Isa. 5:5; Acts 1:3, Acts 1:6; Acts 13:34; Acts 15:14-18; Acts 28:31; Rom. 4:13; Rom. 8:17).

Peter emphasized this same truth in his first sermon after the Day of Pentecost, that heaven would receive Jesus “until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 1:4-5)

3:21). This is an act of redemption, but on a far grander scale than human salvation alone. Our kinsman-redeemer will restore the entire created order.

I believe the key to understanding the 7th trumpet / 3rd lies in the phrase "the mystery of God / godliness". Opposition will be "the mystery of iniquity / ungodliness" which has to do with the revelation of God's character in 144 and unmasking the antichrist .

Revelation 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. 1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Colossians 1:26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Compare with the mystery of iniquity / ungodliness which is in direct opposition with the mystery of God / godliness which is linked with papacy 2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

The mystery of God Rev 10:7 is the preaching of the gospel (Genesis 3:15, Romans 16:25-27, Ephesians 3:9-11, Colossians 1:26, 27).

The finishing of it is the close of probation:

The incarnation of Christ is a mystery. The union of divinity with humanity is a mystery indeed, hidden with God, "even the mystery which hath been hid from ages." It was kept in eternal silence by Jehovah, and was first revealed in Eden, by the prophecy that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and that he should bruise his heel. To present to the world this mystery that God kept in silence for eternal ages before the world was created, before man was created, was the part that Christ was to act in the work he entered upon when he came to this earth. And this wonderful mystery, the incarnation of Christ and the atonement that he made, must be declared to every son and daughter of Adam, whether Jew or Gentile. His sufferings perfectly fulfilled the claims of the law of God. None of the apostles could have filled the deficiency, had there been any. {ST, March 25, 1897 par. 8}

Revelation 10:8-11 “And the voice which I heard from heaven spoke unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. 9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make your belly bitter, but it shall be in your mouth sweet as honey. 10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. 11 And he said unto me, You must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”

8. The voice - Doubtless the voice that had forbidden John to write what had been declared by the seven thunders (verse 4), as shown by the repetition of the phrase "from heaven," and by the adverb "again."

Go and take - John is called upon to act a part in the vision.

The little book - See verse 2.

Open - See verse 2.

In the hand - See verse 2.

The sea ... earth - See verse 2.

9. Give me - John is placed here in the position of expressing his desire for the book. He acts the part of those who proclaimed the Second Advent message in the years 1840-1844. Though mistaken in expecting Christ to return in 1844, they nevertheless were led of God and found the message of the near advent precious to their souls and a message sweet as honey. Their computation of the time element in the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 was correct, but they were mistaken as to the nature of the event to take place at the end of the 2300 days.

Eat it up - Compare the symbolism in Ezekiel 3:1. (cf. Jeremiah 15:16) To eat up the book may be thought of as a figure of speech for comprehending fully the meaning of the message contained in the little roll. John's experience in Revelation 10:10 well describes that of the advent believers as they came more fully to understand the meaning of the three angel's messages (Revelation 14:6-12) in relation to the true fulfillment of the 2300-day prophecy.

Make thy belly bitter - See verse 10. The order of the elements in verse 9 and 10 is a familiar form of Hebrew parallelism. (Revelation 1:2; 9:17)

“It shall be in thy belly bitter ...”

- “It shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey honey. ...”
- “It was in my mouth sweet as honey ...”
- “My belly was bitter.”

In thy mouth sweet - See verse 10.

10. I took - See verse 10.

Sweet as honey - Compare Ezekiel 3:3. As in Ezekiel's experience, God's messages to His servants have often been a mixture of sweetness and bitterness, for they may reveal both His love and His judgments. Prophets of God have experienced both the ecstasy of divine vision and the bitterness of delivering messages of rebuke to men.

In a specific sense the experience that came to John here in vision may be seen as typical of that of the advent believers in the years 1840-1844. When these believers first heard the message of the imminent second coming, it was to them “sweet as honey.” But when Christ did not come as they expected, their experience was indeed bitter. History called it “*the bitter disappointment*.” Compare notes on verse 9.

My belly was bitter - See above on “sweet as honey.”

11. He - Christ, the “angel” of verses 1, 9.

Thou must prophecy again - Compare Ezekiel 3:1, 4. Though John's eating of the roll had ended in bitterness, Christ's reassuring words to the prophet are that he is now to prophesy again. The word translated “must” is in an emphatic position in the Greek. John as a representative of the Second Advent believers after the disappointment, is placed under strong obligation to deliver this message and a further message again. A great work remains to be done.

So what group has continued to preach this message again that Jesus speaks of here as they will be doing the will of God and have His blessing? That group must go forth and proclaim the message of the third angel of Revelation 14:9-12.

Before - Or, “about. Either meaning suits the context. The messages would be both before many peoples ...” and “about many peoples.”

Many peoples - As the full meaning of the third angel's message dawned upon the Second Advent believers, more and more they came to realize that it was a message for the world and that it was to be proclaimed *“before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”* Interestingly enough, the only church that has continued to preach this specific sanctuary message from Daniel 8 is the Seventh-day Adventist church. There conviction has resulted in one of the most widespread programs of world evangelization that Christian history has seen as Seventh-day Adventists have gone forth to proclaim *“to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people”* (Revelation 14:6) the message they believe has been committed to them. There are in fact only two churches that are in every country and hence have gone to every nation. One being the Papal church and the other being the Seventh-day Adventist church, which are poles apart.

So it is with great interest that we find God preordained this event and is of such great significance that He recorded it here in chapter 10. It is also interesting that rumour condemns the Seventh-day Adventist church for setting a time for the return of Christ. But in fact, it was every other denomination at that time that were expecting the return of Christ that begun with one William Miller who was a Baptist preacher. The Seventh-day Adventist church rose as a result of this event God spoke of here, but did not exist for another 60 years after this event. Based on this and much more I have observed, it is as if Satan is making war with this group. See Revelation 12:17.

CONCLUSION

In Rev 10 John is named, but the intent is symbolic, just as all the material around chap. 10 is symbolic. John is here personifying the people of God who would be alive in the timeframe required by the context of the passage. The time required is our own day, by which I mean the time after 1844. If the angel were speaking to John as a single literal individual, why would he speak of prophesying again? At this point John had not finished prophesying once. He knew he wasn't finished writing down what the angel had to tell him, so why should be disappointed to learn that there was more? He had twelve more chapters to go before he could be said to have prophesied once. Prophesying twice was not an issue he would consider meaningful. But it was vitally important to the people he was being used here to represent. What do the

seven thunders say? Something God chose to withhold from His people in and around 1844. It is true that we don't know exactly what the thunders said, but in hindsight we can at least know what they were talking about, because we have a detailed knowledge of what the Millerites missed – what was withheld from them, i.e., that Christ would come "to His temple" (Mal 3:1) in 1844, not to the earth; that the sanctuary was not on earth, or the earth, but a literal structure in heaven; that chronological time would not end in 1844, although prophetic time would, thus creating a distinction between the two that is still important today; that the door of mercy did not close when Christ entered the most holy place; and that because of this important fact there was still a work they needed to do – on a scale no one living then could have imagined in their wildest dreams. The basis for the disappointment of vss. 8-11 is explained in vss. 1-7. The two sections go together in such a way that neither one can be understood correctly without the other. Nor can either section be understood well without a knowledge of what the timeframe the angel has in mind. He was talking about the experience of the Millerites in the years leading up to, and then beyond, 1844.