there is yet another step needed. The Mystery is not  
only to be understood, but to come to an end.  
 The roar of the angel, the thunders of the throne,  
are for the ungodly earth; the oath and the book are for  
the comfort of the Lord’s people, and designed to set  
their heart on searching and digesting the prophecies.  
 The book was to produce on John a twofold effect.  
In his mouth it was to be sweet. This is the effect of  
a joyful communication. “*Pleasant words are as an  
honeycomb, sweet to the soul*, and health to the bones”  
(Prov. xvi. 24). “*How sweet are thy words unto my taste!  
yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*” (Ps. cxix. 108).  
But the stomach after the reception of the scroll, was  
to be made bitter. This is the effect of sorrow. “Call  
me not Naomi” [PLEASANT], said Naomi, “call me Mara  
[BITTER], for the Almighty hath dealt very *bitterly* with  
me” (Ruth i. 20).  
 Thus the book contained communications first of a  
pleasant nature, and then of a sorrowful description.  
 Ezekiel’s roll was bitter: for “there were written  
therein lamentation, and mourning, and woe.” After  
receiving it, “I went,” says he, “in *bitterness*, in the  
heat of my spirit” (Ezek. iii. 3, 14; ii. 9, 10).  
 But it may be said, “How could the reception of the  
New Covenant of God’s grace produce bitterness in the  
soul?” We must, I think, suppose that the book contains not only the terms of the new covenant, which are  
sovereign, but also the sorrowful prophetic circumstances  
which introduce, and make evidently necessary, the  
New Covenant. Then the eating of the book and  
its effects will answer to those words of the angel, in  
Daniel, concerning the sealed book. “None of the  
wicked shall understand, but *the righteous shall understand*” (Dan. xii. 10). Intelligence of the Lord’s purposes is sweet: but the view of His terrible judgments is sorrowful indeed.